

**KOREAN
FILM** No.28
AFM Edition
2008
Observatory

<Crossing> Production Notes

Korean Films

at American Film Market

Upcoming Films in 2009



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KOREAN FILM NEWS



<Linda Linda Linda>

LEGENDARY LABOR FILM DVD IS IN THE MARKETS

<Night Before Strike>, the first feature film on labor issues produced in Korea, and stormed the universities in the 90s, and is seeing a DVD release 18 years after its debut on the silver screen. On September 10th at a cafe in Seoul's Hongik University area, a celebration was held to commemorate the release. Many attended the event including senior filmmakers who smuggled the film onto campus and screened it behind the government's back, guarding the place with bats and steel pipes. The youth generation of that era watched this must-see film countless times in their college years.

In 2008, the title was chosen as one of the Korea Film Council(KOFIC)'s 'Support for more diverse film DVDs' program, and the DVD production process got under way this past June. The film got much attention when it was first screened in 1990, despite its harsh conditions, drawing more than a million



<Night Before Strike>

BAE DOO-NA STARRING IN JAPANESE FILM

An actress with character, BAE Doo-na is to star in another Japanese movie. This is her second time to be in a Japanese movie, following <Linda Linda Linda> (2005) directed by YAMASHITA Nobuhiro. KOREEDA Hirokazu is the Japanese director BAE will be working with this time around. KOREEDA, who visited PIFF with <Still Walking>, announced his new project, <Cocco's Endless Journey> on October 4th, saying "for my next work which will be a fantasy melodrama, BAE Doo-na is chosen to be the heroine." He introduced his new piece as "a film about the relationship between people,

where something not human learns how to speak, earns a heart and falls in love."

As to why he chose BAE Doo-na for the role, he says "I am a big fan of her." He added, "I have seen all of her movies including <Barking Dogs Never Bite>, <Take Care of My Cat>, <The Host>, and many more." Also, he evaluated BAE as "an actress who can be fully absorbed into the movie instead of just wanting to look pretty. She is also an actress with a sense for comedy." Considering all of BAE's strong points, it is expected that KOREEDA's new film will have some comical elements added to it.



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Designed by ason



<Thirst>

people, which exceeded the record set by <Sopyonje>, the most popular commercial film at the time. The DVD includes a completely restored version of the film, worked on by the camera director OH Cheong-ok. Bonus material shows the present life of those ‘men with the camera’ who created this legend, 18 years after.

<THIRST> GETS HOLLYWOOD INVESTMENTS

Hollywood's Universal Pictures International and Focus Pictures announced they will be investing in PARK Chan-wook's <Thirst>. CJ Entertainment, the domestic distributor for the film sent out a press release on September 11, reporting that “<Thirst> has successfully attracted co-investment from Hollywood's major studios, and it is the first time a Korean film has done so

during the production stage. The film has also secured North American distribution rights through these major studios, which is rare for a Korean film.” Universal Studios, the parent company of Universal Pictures is owned by NBC Universal that covers media entertainment development, production, marketing, news and broadcasting. Focus Pictures is also owned by NBC Universal, and the company previously by took part in the film production and distribution of movies like <Lust, Caution>, and <Atonement>. Director PARK Chan-wook has expressed “I believe this is a more advanced form of co-production compared to exporting the film after it is completed. Since it is a film to be distributed globally, I will try to make it more ‘universal’”. At the moment, <Thirst> is in its last stages of shooting.

PRODUCTION OF IPTV FILMS KICKS OFF

A major wave of IPTV film production has set off. Recently, mobile communication company KT announced it will be producing ‘films for IPTV’ in order to secure content supply for MegaTV, its own IPTV company. Their plan is to produce 4 films together with another subsidiary company SidusFnH; <Story of Wine> by LEE Chul-ha, <Fugitive> (working title) by HWANG Byeong-gug, <Just Kidding> (working title) by LEE Moo-young, and <Man I Want to Kill> by KIM Dong-uk, then broadcasting them through MegaTV from mid-November. A representative of KT Media HQ explains “There are themes that are hard to make into a commercial films for release in theaters. Also there are scripts with potential, which are considered risky. We are trying to make them into films for IPTV and experiment with diverse subjects and genres.” Some voices raise concern: “KT should be putting in more efforts on

actual film production” but on the other hand some are welcoming the news, “IPTV films may be another possibility.”

NEW ATTEMPTS BY YOUNG SCREENWRITERS

Hand in hand with publishers, young screenwriters are experimenting with a new model for pre-production and production. ‘Story:sm’ is a group of screenwriters including many who won the KOFIC's screenwriting market awards. At the moment ‘Story:sm’ is in the middle of negotiating for a contract with Wisdom Media, a subsidiary company of publishing firm Wisdom House. It is to cooperate together in contents development for one-source multi-use. RYU Young-jae of ‘Story:sm’ says “The objective for the writers is not in publishing the book. Rather, our goal is to have our original stories made into films based on the publication.” He explains it is to overcome the current situation where it is difficult to turn original scripts into films, and treatment of writers are unsatisfactory.

The publishing house is also positive about the offer as it provides opportunity to discover new stories and new writers. One publishing personnel added ‘Korea’s publishing and literature circles are still inclined to pure literature. By bringing in screenwriters, we hope to see more storytelling that appeals to the public, a



<Pharmacy for Peasant>

field that was quite weak until now.” One filmmaker analyzed such movement, “There had been some positive examples like <Tazza: The High Rollers> and <Le Grand Chef> that achieved success from adaption of original stories. It seems writers and publishers are trying to actively develop more of these cases.”

THE RISE OF INDIE FILM DISTRIBUTORS

One by one, distributors specializing in independent films are on the rise. Cinema Dal is one of them, a professional indie film distributor created by indie film producers. Cinema Dal successfully introduced 4 documentaries at this year's Pusan International Film Festival, including <Old Man and the Land>, <Pharmacy for Peasant>, <Into the Breeze>, <Shared Streets>. Producer



<Drawing Paper>

KIM Il-kwon, who is heading Cinema Dal together with producer LEE Sang-yeop, explains why they founded the company, “Although the numbers of indie films produced are continuously increasing, reality is that those properly introduced to the public are limited to only a handful.” Instead of holding on to theater releases, Cinema Dal intends to actively promote screenings in communities. The plan is to sufficiently utilize various cultural institutions such as civil groups, educational institutions, public organizations, etc.

On the other hand, another distributor worth noting is Kino-Eye, which will be holding a Digital Exhibition from October 10, celebrating its first anniversary. Films prepared by Kino-Eye awaiting the audience include <Sleeping Beauty> by LEE Han-na, <Da Capo> by NOH Jin-su, <A Light Sleep> by IM Sung-chan, <Missing Person > by LEE Seo, <Drawing Paper> by KIM Sun-hee, <A Matter Of Death I - A Study About Beetles> by KIM Eun-hee, <American Zombie> by Grace LEE. WON Seung-hwan who is the director of Indie Space, a theater specializing in indie films, says “it is true that there was an overload in indie film distribution because it focused on INDIE STORY only. In the future the audiences will be able to experience films in various ways.”

LEE Young-jin / Cine21



<A Matter Of Death I - A Study About Beetles>

KOFIC NEWS

KOFIC SELECTS <CROSSING> FOR OSCAR SUBMISSION

The Korean Film Council (KOFIC) announced the selection of KIM Tae-gyun's <Crossing> as the Korean submission to the 81st Academy Awards (Oscars) for the Best Foreign Film section.

The KOFIC committee in charge of the selection made their decision based on the conviction that the human drama <Crossing> is the best contender in the light of the academy's preferences, judging by previous Best Foreign Film winners. The committee members came to their decision after considering both the content in line with expected Academy tastes and the potential for a successful commercial U.S. release of the shortlisted films.

<Crossing> tells the story of a North Korean father and son who individually cross over into China. CHA In-pyo plays the father who enters China in search of medication for his ill wife. His son starts to search for his father after he doesn't return in time.



<Crossing>

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KOFIC NAMES NEW DIRECTOR AT KOFIC STUDIO

On Wednesday, October 1, 2008, KOFIC appointed Mr. WON Chun-sik as the new studio director. Search for the new director was conducted through open registration to all candidates including those employed at KOFIC and, after a comprehensive screening process, Mr. WON, who was until then the manager of the domestic promotion department at KOFIC, was selected as the new director. Chairperson KANG stated that by naming the director of the STUDIO, the lineup to lead the 4th term Korean Film Council is now completed, with balanced operation of the council to a be expected from the appointment of a secretary general, a professional from outside of the organization and the director of KOFIC STUDIO with an



KOFIC STUDIO's new director(Left)

individual within the organization. Meanwhile, newly elected director WON is a veteran staffer of 22 years at KOFIC, who came into his own as ideal candidate for solid administration, stabilizing both internal and external matters at the center. Since joining then Korean Motion Picture Promotion Corporation back in 1986, Mr. WON carried out in-depth works involving architectural and construction planning of the current KOFIC Studios at Namyangju from 1991 to 1997. In addition to his domestic promotion works, he has recently been in charge of running KOBIS, a nationwide computerized box-office data system, and is recognized as a talented individual who is most qualified to oversee the activities at KOFIC STUDIO.

KOFIC KOREAN FILM NIGHT AT PIFF A SUCCESS

On October 5, 'KOFIC Korean Film Night took place at the Paradise Hotel Haeundae in Busan, Korea. This successful event was attended by over 1000 domestic and international guests attending the 13th Pusan International Film Festival (PIFF), providing an invaluable place to offer and share the views on the current state of Korean cinema. During his opening greetings, chairperson KANG, the host of the event, once again emphasized the union of the film community by urging everyone to "join together to overcome the current

crisis in the Korean film community."

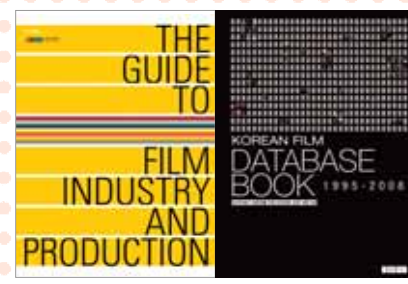
The highlight of KOFIC Korean Film Night was the performance by a rock band consisting of Korean film professionals, including director LEE Jang-ho, Dyne Films prexy Jonathan H. KIM and film actor SON Byung-ho, which gathered enthusiastic responses from the guests for their fine music performances. Also, as a surprise, the members of KOFIC put on an elaborate costume-play of notable characters from Korean films to outstanding replies for their creative and entertaining performance. Meanwhile, overseas film festival organizers and buyers at the reception displayed a positive outlook on the Korean film industry easily overcoming the current difficulties with passionate efforts from its film professionals.

KOFIC PUBLISHES TWO BOOKS ON KOREAN FILM INDUSTRY

The KOFIC has published 'The Guide to Korean Film Industry and Production' and 'Korean Film Database Book' which were distributed during this year's PIFF period.

'The Guide to Korean Film Industry and Production' is published with a goal of expanding domestic on-location shoot and co-production possibilities by introducing the production system and current state of Korean film industry to filmmakers from overseas, including producers seeking Korean co-production and/or location-shootings in Korea.

'Korean Film Database Book' is an update of the 2006 'Korean Film Database Book 2000~2006' and is published with the purpose of setting the proper notation on Korean film data, including both Korean and English titles,



'The Guide to Film Industry and Production' & 'Korean Film Database Book'



KOFIC Korean Film Night at PIFF

Korean, English and Chinese names of directors and 2 main actors/actresses of films produced between 1995 and first-half of 2008. The contents from the book are also scheduled to be available in the near future at KOFIC's English language site (www.kofic.or.kr/english) for reference.

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KOFIC STAGING KOREAN FILM FESTIVAL IN CHINA

From November 14 to 25, the Korean Film Festival in China will make its inaugural showings in Beijing, Shanghai and Kunming, respectively. This film festival is co-sponsored by KOFIC and China's State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), as a part of annual film festival exchanges between Korea and China to be held, becoming the leading government-sponsored cinema exchanging event between two nations.

A total of 12 Korean films will be screened during the festival period, including <The Happy Life>, <Secret Sunshine>, <Miracle on 1st Street>, <Hwang Jin Yi>, <Yobi, the Five-tailed Fox>, <A Man Who was Superman>, <Venus and Mars>, <Maundy Thursday>, <Beyond the Years>, <Bunt>, <Christmas in August> and <200 Pounds Beauty>. Furthermore, such notable Korean filmmakers as LEE Joon-ik, SONG Hae-

sung, CHANG Yoon-hyun and LEE Sung-gang will be present at the screenings to meet with Chinese audiences.

Meanwhile, such accompanying programs as 'Night of Exchange among Korean and Chinese Film Professionals' and 'Seminar on Revitalizing Korean-Chinese Film Co-Production' are expected to provide outstanding opportunities to strengthen the cooperation in the field of cinema between Korea and China.

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KOFIC'S KOREAN CINEMA SHOWCASE IN JAPAN

From December 13 to 19, a showcase of Korean cinema will take place in Tokyo, Japan, sponsored by KOFIC and run by Cine Qua Non. This showcase will screen ten of Korea's latest films, including <Sunny> by LEE Joon-ik and the <Crossing> by KIM Tae-gyun, providing an invaluable opportunity to be presented with genre entertainment and brand new sensibility found in Korean cinema today.

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Korea and New Zealand Becomes 'Soul Mates' with Films

Korean-New Zealand Co-Production Treaty Is Signed

Some Korean films, including <Silmido>, <Old Boy> and <Antarctic Journal>, have been partly filmed in New Zealand. <Black Sheep> is one of the most popular films screened at the Puchon International Fantastic Film Festival last year; it was produced by New Zealand filmmakers with investment from a Korean corporation. The \$42,000,000 epic <Laundry Warrior>

a Korea-NZ-US co-production starring JANG Dong-kun and Kate BOSWORTH, is still in post production and was shot entirely in NZ.

To promote these intimate the interactions between the film industries of the two countries, the Korean and New Zealand governments signed a co-production treaty on September 29th in Wellington. The agreement includes

financial assistance as well as technical support such as computer graphics and digital filming, along with easier customs procedures for equipments and support for visa issuance. Famous for the <Lord of the Rings> trilogy, New Zealand is becoming increasingly popular with its beautiful nature and post-production technologies among filmmakers all over the world.

The first film under the co-production treaty is <Soul Mates> produced by Korean company Film Alchemy, and directed by New Zealander Scott REYNOLDS, the director of <The Ugly> and <When Strangers Appear>. The film is a tale of ghosts centered around a Korean girl (HAN Chae-young) living in New Zealand. Scott REYNOLDS said he would like to make the film with respect to Korean culture. Production will begin in January next year in Auckland, New Zealand.

YOO Joo-ha / FILM2.0



<Antarctic Journal>

New Zealand and Korea, a Shared Cinematic Spirit

It's not uncommon to hear the reports of doom and gloom in the Korean film industry. From the huge film production bubble bursting post-2005 to the global credit crunch and ballooning production budgets, the outlook could seem quite bleak. However, the Korean film industry is not resting in negative publicity and metaphor. For many in the industry, there is a breath of optimism in the form of international co-productions. These are not just a way for Korea to increase budgets and funding options but are seen as a spring board into

international markets. Therefore, many producers are scrambling to increase their international options by attending overseas film marts and festivals and inviting overseas producers to Korea.

Producers working between Korea and New Zealand though, already have a head start to international success with the signing last month of a co-production treaty between the two countries. Of course many of the hopes and dreams surrounding such ventures are shrouded in idealism. Cultural differences can go beyond mere slip ups in language and etiquette all the

way to encountering divides in industry wide, film making paradigms. Even slight misunderstandings have the potential to derail an international production. However, producers and industry leaders from both countries agree on the potential for success that both countries can achieve working together.

Although the co-production treaty has been a number of years in the making, NZ and Korea's shared film making ambitions kicked off in the early 1990s. Since then, a growing number of film industry exchanges and



<Black Sheep>

agreements have taken place. Throughout this time, leading the charge has been Wellington based film entrepreneur Michael STEPHENS who worked with Korean film producers and later on alongside NZ directors like Peter JACKSON on films such as the <Lord of the Rings> trilogy. STEPHENS now works closely between both countries fostering film industry relations. For STEPHENS a close film relationship between Korea and NZ is especially appropriate because of shared ethos. Both countries make films on low budgets, sometimes ridiculously so in relation to the Hollywood blockbusters that dominate both nations' movie screens. This necessity-breeds-creativity approach to film making ties in with the 'abundant spirit' that he sees inherent in film makers from both countries.

What makes a co-production relationship between NZ and Korea particularly effective is the symbiosis between both film industries. This is because NZ and Korea both want different things. Korea for example, although being a digital paradise, is attracted to New Zealand's post production facilities such as 'Park Road Post' in Wellington and their expertise in that area. In terms of shooting exteriors, Korea has always been interested in using NZ as one big exotic location. Yet Korea sees most of the benefits in the relationship inherent after post production has finished. Given track records of a relative few films like the <Lord of the Rings>

trilogy, <The Piano> and <Once Were Warriors> achieving notable overseas success, there is also the hope that the Korean film industry can piggy back its way into overseas markets. Intrinsic to this is Korea's ambition to make films in English or partly in English potentially taking them straight into English speaking territory.

The success of a Korea/NZ film relationship is hardly one sided though. STEPHENS cites Korea's relatively large market as a major factor in New Zealand's pursuit of the co-production treaty. Quite simply, NZ could do with an active regular film going nation of 48 million people to consume their films. More conversely however and hardly expected, he also cites Korea's locations as a major draw card. Because what commonly attracts Korean film companies to New Zealand's shores, such as open space, low population density and the natural environment would be the antithesis of what NZ directors could be looking for – a dynamic, busy urban yet traditional Asian environment. There is also the issue of film making talent. Koreans are natural story tellers, who up to 2007 were churning out at least a hundred films per year. For Stephens, a young film making nation such as NZ could do with such talent.

Of course the co-production treaty itself has tangible benefits that both

countries will benefit from. The most obvious advantage is that official co-productions will "be fully entitled to all the benefits which are or may be accorded to national films". In effect, co-productions will be treated as a local production with the biggest advantage being the freeing up of government funding as well as making them eligible for other incentives. Then there is the relaxation of laws surrounding the movement of both crews and equipment into both countries and the promotion of technical cooperation. Both countries will also join forces when marketing films overseas.

While the treaty will make it much easier to get Korean/NZ co-productions off the ground and into international markets, perhaps even more important is the symbolism of the treaty. In STEPHENS words, such a treaty 'seals the effort' that he and a great many other film pioneers, in both countries, have achieved over the years. The co-production treaty signals the next step of the journey, one that its hard working instigators believe will take both countries into a very successful, shared cinematic future.

David OXENBRIDGE



<Old Boy>

Deep Truth Waiting at the End of a 8,000km Journey

4 Years in the Making Across Korea; China; Mongolia,
the Production Notes for <Crossing>

Planning Process

<Crossing> had started off in 2005, from a proposal made by Patrick CHEH, a producer in America. At the time, CHEH was trying to adapt 'In the Absence of Sun' (a book published on April 1st, 2002, telling the story of Helie LEE who helped her relative LEE Yong-woon and his family to escape from North Korea in 1997) into a motion picture. While searching for director and screenwriter, he pitched it to director KIM Tae-kyun so that the two could work on this project. Yet complications arose and the book could not be adapted after all. Thus director KIM and LEE Yoo-jin, who joined as the screenwriter, began to work on a new script. It was based on a revised direction with its motive obtained from the defectors' interviews that was aired on MBC television documentary called '30-Day Report on The Defectors in China, Part 2: Crossing Death' (directed by KIM Chul-jin and CHAE Hwan-gyu).

Since <Crossing> is a real life story of the defectors, reality was the biggest concern in the process of screenwriting. To achieve a high level of realism, director KIM and writer LEE interviewed more than 100 people including actual defectors, as well as members of NGO and brokers who help people to defect. In particular, LEE interviewed defectors living in Korea for over 6 months. However, each defector had a different point of view, and it became harder to choose which direction to take. In November 2005, they flew to China to contact local brokers directly. LEE, a female coordinator, and an NGO broker made arrangements to meet a local Korean-Chinese broker. As soon as they met, the broker changed his mind and began demanding money. It was a dangerous situation. In the end, the money was paid and the broker brought 5 North Koreans to the lodging, and the interview began. The main story was formed via this interview.



Pre-Production

May 15, 2007 _ Lost

In the end, I boarded the plane to Mongolia. It was to join the film preparation team. Hunger, despair, desperateness, separations, death. How am I to express their aching emotions, the emotions of those who went through all the pains known to man. I am lost just like a student who doesn't know what to study for an exam that's fast approaching.

؛ "CHA In-pyo, from 'A Journal of 131 Days'

Casting

<Crossing> had to go through a tough casting process. As the main characters were a father and his son, the casting choices were very limited. Countless actors were suggested for the father role, but the final vote went to CHA In-pyo. This decision was only possible with the firm faith of director KIM. CHA is a top star in Korea but he didn't have much luck on screen, failing in each attempt. Director KIM believed that CHA as a human, rather than as an actor, had the power to make people take in the film's honesty with their true non-commercial heart. However, actor CHA had a hard time accepting the offer. "I am not an actor with big ticket power. Films like this should be made with someone who can appeal to a wide audience, so that more people will come and see." These were the words from him, declining the proposal. But it was just one picture that made him change his mind. It was a photograph of a young beggar taken at Cheongjin station, all skin and bone. Seeing that photo, he decided to star in the movie with his pure

heart. As the decision was made, he did his best without looking back. In the case of the boy's role, there were different issues. It wouldn't be far from the truth to say that the staff auditioned all child actors in the country. Nevertheless, it was quite difficult to find a child actor who suited the special circumstances, playing the role of a defector. Before <Crossing>, SHIN Myoung-cheol was just a simple country boy whose only experience with movies was in <The Bridge at Nogunri> (2008, upcoming), appearing along with many other boys from the neighborhood. This small and slender boy auditioned 3 times, and during his last audition his tearful acting won him the role of 'Jun-i' over 600 other candidates. Director KIM felt burdened to direct a non-professional child actor, but he sensed the boy's natural talents and went on with the decision to cast an unknown child actor.

There were still problems after the casting. The North Korean dialect rose as an obstacle. To perfect the accents, the cast members received North Korean lessons for 3 months with 2 real defector tutors. The North Korean dialect teachers have always stayed on set to correct the actors' accents and help them speak properly. Later on after a screening, the defectors praised the actors by saying they spoke better dialect than themselves. Such praises were a big gift to the actors who worked so hard.

Location Hunting

Obviously, the setting for <Crossing> is North Korea. As the main characters are defectors, it is only natural to have



North Korea as its backdrop. However, North Korea is not a place easily accessible by South Koreans. The crew gathered information by interviewing many defectors, and by choosing KIM Cheol-young, who is also a defector, as assistant director. The process was meticulous to make sure all facts and settings were as real as possible. Assistant director KIM had escaped from North Korea in 1999, and had reached Korea through the same route depicted in <Crossing>. His experience is fully incorporated into the film, and location hunting proceeded according to his escape routes. Defectors preferred the route that started with crossing the Tumen river, then across China to the Gobi Desert of Mongolia, and finally coming to Korea after making contact with the Korean embassy. Yet if they are captured or exposed in the process they are brought to defector camps or even face death. In order to fully recreate this escape route, the staff shot the film in China and Mongolia, fully absorbing the details of the route.

The South Korean cities and landscape are different from those of North Korea as the lifestyles are different. To recreate scaled down North Korean villages, an open set was built in the former mining area of Gangwon province for indoor scenes. For outdoor scenes, the crew scouted Mongolia in search of villages most similar to North Korea. This was done so not because of the natural environments, but because of the housing structures. The only way to save budget was to find houses most similar to that of North Korea, so that extra sets don't have to be built. The crew had to search everywhere in South Korea for such houses, including mining areas on the verge of demolition.

During pre-production research in China, emphasis was made on costumes and props. Many North Koreans actually use Chinese products, and many old props were retrieved. When shooting in China, due to a sensitive diplomatic relationship China has with North Korea, the film was shot on location without permission from the Chinese officials. For safety reasons, the shooting period was kept to a bare minimum, and the crew on location was small and always mindful of the local police. Because of this unorthodox method of shooting, it was not easy to find shooting locations. Scouting and shoot managing were all done by local staff who were in close partnership with local productions. The pre-production research trips were not just for location hunting but also to see and understand the

escape routes and to remind themselves of why this film needs to be made. Actor CHA joined the pre-production research trip to Mongolia with other crew members and unexpectedly fell ill in the Gobi desert.

May 2007.

Firewood in the stove burned furiously inside a small ger, filling it with intense heat as if I am in a sauna. The fever I expected to go away lingered on and tortured me. Later on, vomiting began. Throwing up what's inside of me, I looked up for a moment and saw the sky filled with stars. Countless stars laying low as if they are about to shower down on me were covering the entire world like a gigantic carpet. The indescribable greatness of Mother Earth made me forget the fever for a while. Then a thought crossed my mind like lightning. "Ah, this was how they withered away..."

؛ "CHA In-pyo, from 'A Journal of 131 Days'

Arts

<Crossing> is almost a historical drama. It is difficult to find sceneries similar to North Korea in the southern part of the peninsula. But if such different images are shown on screen, it may seem artificial so a few locations were set up as accent points. Along the storyline of the film, stresses were given and taken away with the focus on space being a natural living place for the characters. Much effort and care was put into the set of Yeongwol, Gangwon province, not only because it was the first shooting location, but also because it was the first glimpse into North Korea's countryside. Just constructing the set took over a month with 20 staff staying there at all times. More than 60 people were part of the construction, and it cost less than building an entire village. The place used to be the living quarters of miners but since the mines closed down it was almost in ruins. The miners' village in Yeongwol was chosen after scouting everywhere around the country, as the basic housing structures were most similar to North Korean housings. The arrangements and designs of windows and doors were changed into North Korean styles, and most of



Director KIM Tae-kyun (left) and the main cast CHA In-pyo

the texture and colors of the facades were replaced.

Similar changes were done to the Beyiyo village of Mongolia, where the exterior of the North Korean villages was shot. The window structures, wall textures, fence colors were partially changed for consistency. The height and color of the fences in Yeongwol were adjusted to match the fences of Beyiyo village. Yet it wasn't easy to create the old and worn out look and feel with new materials. It had to be not just old, but a delicate mixture of different colors. For this purpose, in case of the fences of Yeongwol sets were elaborately painted over more than 20 times. The Beyiyo village itself was not perfect so the art crew that worked in Yeongwol went over to Mongolia, fixing parts using the same methods. Many staff members agreed that the Beyiyo village was identical to the Macha-ri village in Yeongwol. It was lucky for the film crew that they found Beyiyo village. Atmosphere was very close to a North Korean village, and the surrounding mountain ridge was the decisive factor that made them finalize the place as a shooting location. The reason why 70% of the North Korean backdrop scenes were shot there was because the socialist atmosphere and architecture still remained.

Production

July 2nd, 2007. Filming finally began. First shooting went on for 15 days, which focused on the North Korean village set at Yeongwol Macha-ri village. Because of monsoons, there was some trouble with the schedule but the crew and actors worked together and gradually absorbed themselves into the production.

The shooting in China took place for 15 days (June 18 ~ August 1, 2007) with a bare minimum number of crew and actors. The shooting did not go smoothly from the very beginning. Obtaining Chinese visas took some time due to a complicated process. Only a few of the staff members were able to obtain proper visas for the shooting and the rest had to enter the country with a tourist visa. As an ally country of North Korea, the Chinese officials filled the crew with fear, even to the extent that they felt their safety may be in



jeopardy. As the theme of defecting from North Korea is very sensitive, and to ensure the safety of North Korean defector staff, it was stressed that conversations on the topic of the film itself as well as any other topics had to be carried out carefully during the shooting. The advance party purchased needed products through acquaintances (local production staff) who understand the local situation very well. They also made preparations with the help of local staff so that when the main crew arrived, they can enter the country swiftly and without any trouble. During this relatively short period of time, there were many dangerous situations. Safety of the team was the most important factor. Particularly during the lumber scene, the actors had to run on dangerous logs in summer heat, making them as well as the entire staffs nervous during the shooting.

End of July, 2007 _ A sad joke

Panting like a dog under the blazing summer sun, I made a passing joke complaining that "shooting this movie is harder than actually escaping from North Korea." Fellow actors, who were running with me, laughed, and staff laughed as well. The dialect teacher standing beside me, a defector, faintly smiled along. As he turned away, the back of his head seemed to say, "No, that's not right. If you get tired of running, you can stop, rest, and then run again later. After running, you will go back to your hotel, fill your stomach with food and go to bed. As for us... no matter how much we run, we have no where to return to."

; "CHA In-pyo, from 'A Journal of 131 Days'

Shootings in Mongolia were held from August 8 to September 11, 2007, 10 days longer than the initial plan. There were a few outdoor shootings of North Korean villages and concentration camps that weren't possible in South Korea. Fortunately, a better location was found in Mongolia so the shooting schedule was adjusted and extended. As the scenes originally planned for domestic shoots were shifted to Mongolia, it became possible to effectively manage the schedule and the funding. Since the shooting schedule suddenly changed, there were problems with visas due to extended stay for the crew, and the issue of shipping the equipments and props, but in the end satisfactory images were obtained.

Exefell and JIJ Film provided help with local coordination



in Mongolia, and about 10 local translators assisted the shooting and the process. As for the scenes that could not be shot in China, they had to be replaced with shots in Mongolia and South Korea. For example, the scene where they roam into the embassy, the staff could not find a proper location in South Korea, although they tried hard during the pre-production period. Because of the film's story, the defectors had to trespass into the embassy where the Chinese police were stationed in front. As Mongolia is diplomatically uncomfortable with China, shooting such a scene there was quite a task. In the end the embassy scene had to be canceled, but with the cooperation of a Mongolian coordinator, the shooting schedule could be adjusted beforehand.

<Crossing> was the first Korean movie to be filmed in Mongolia's Gobi desert. To prepare for the desert shooting, all staff members were given towels and goggles before departure. Also, local prepaid cell phones were given to the main crew in case of emergency. However, because it is not easy to predict the routes in the desert, it took a long time to move and there were difficulties due to lack of decent communication facilities. In South Korea as well as in China, not a day was wasted because of rain, but the ever-changing weather of the Gobi desert delayed the plans. The crew spent a painful week in the Gobi desert in order to clear the tight schedule. Yet when the day was set, and the stars rose to the sky, the staff went to sleep, consoled by the beauty of peaceful earth.

The troubles that occurred during overseas shooting were inconveniences with the language, unfamiliar geographic situations, and most of all, food and lodgings. Because of the sensitive and dangerous theme of the movie, from the beginning till the end, the mood was tense during the shooting. From time to time, there were situations where the crew had to understand and accept the customs, traditions and culture of host country. Mongolian nomads make a living by grazing horses, lambs, or goats. Thus it is natural for them to cherish grass and trees, But the Korean staff with their priorities on the shoot, unintentionally conflicted with the locals over protection of the trees.

September 27, 2007, Imjin river. The final scene to shoot on location was the escape scene across the Tumen river, marking the end of the 3-month shoot. Including additional shoots, a total of 55 shootings took place, and as the schedule was managed tightly due to various problems related to oversea locations, expenses were saved. Every scene in the movie was shot with careful consideration for the facts, making them as real as possible. Rather, to tone down the harshness of the reality, at times it was shot sentimentally. Through China and Mongolia to South Korea, the shooting schedule followed the routes of North Korean escapees, which provided a good opportunity to sincerely approach and reflect on actual defectors.

One of the most unforgettable memories I have is a documentary I saw 10 years ago on North Korea. There were children only around 5 years old who were picking up noodles that had fallen on the ground, eating them after washing them in the sewers. It was hard to believe that such things are happening so close to here, and I was ashamed. Memory from then remains completely in my head, and if 10 years have passed, I'll think about my life once again through <Crossing>.

; "From the interview with director KIM Tae-kyun

YU Jae-kyeong / <Crossing> Production Staff

HONG Jee-yong / Producer





Return of the Masters

IM Kwon-taek, HONG Sangsoo, LEE Chang-dong,
PARK Chan-wook's New Films

<Thirst>

Is there a way to end the slump in the Korean film industry that started in 2007. Industry people expect 2009 to be the turning point. Unlike films of 2008, which hardly had any artistic or commercial success, upcoming 2009 films may achieve acceptance from critics and audience. IM Kwon-taek, HONG Sangsoo, LEE Chang-dong and PARK Chan-wook, the international film festival regulars, will release their new films, and ZHANG Lu, BONG Joon-ho and HUR Jin-ho will also announce their new projects.

PARK Chan-wook's <Thirst>

HONG Sangsoo's new film <You Don't Even Know> (working title) is an expression of his will to break through the great difficulty the Korean film industry is facing. This film is a completely independent film produced by himself. He had to face financial difficulties while shooting <Night and Day> last year and now his new film is facing the same difficulty because he decided to produce it independently. Although it is produced with an extremely low-budget and short shooting period, the cast is all-star. Actors like KIM Tae-woo (<Woman Is the Future of Man>), UM Ji-won (<A Tale of Cinema>) and KO Hyun-joung (<Women on the Beach>) who already have worked with HONG in the past, and other famous actors such as YU Jun-sang, KONG Hyung-jin, MOON Chang-gil, HA Jung-woo and JUNG Yumi are involved without any fees upfront.

With these big stars coming together, this film does not seem too thrifty. The main character in HONG's 9th film <You Don't Even Know> (working title) is a film director KOO Gyung-nam(KIM Tae-woo). The name in Korean implies the man is someone who travels around to see the sights. He meets different characters who restarted their lives clean over. First place he visits is Jecheon where he meets film festival programmer KONG Yun-hee (UM Ji-won). He continues his journey down to Jeju Island and meets a painter (MOON Chang-gil) and his wife KO Soon-yi (KO Hyun-joung). In more ways than one, this film will be very

PARK Chan-wook's new film <Thirst> combines vampire element with moral ambiguity and blends them with his provocatively unique imagination.

HONG-like. One of the main production staff said, "the film steps away from the sharp beauty of cinematic form, trying to make some changes while being more loose in form but more dynamic in atmosphere. It is more hilarious but also bitter at the same time."

PARK Chan-wook's new film <Thirst> combines vampire elements with moral ambiguity and blends them with his provocatively unique imagination. Sang-hyun (SONG Kang-ho) is a respected priest in a small town and works as a dedicated volunteer at a local hospital. He leaves for Africa to participate in research to develop a vaccine for a fatal disease

called E.V.. When the research fails, Sang-hyun is infected with the disease that he tried to cure. Somehow he is miraculously cured and flies back to Korea. Hearing of this miracle, locals gather to be blessed by him. In the midst of it all, he meets a childhood friend Kang-woo (SHIN Ha-kyun) and becomes infatuated with his wife Tae-joo (KIM Ok-vin). One day, Sang-hyun dies after vomiting blood and is reborn as a vampire who then comes after Tae-joo. <Thirst> will be an ethically controversial film with violation of sanctity. The main female character will expose her body more than in any other Korean films. <Thirst> recently wrapped up and began post-production.

LEE Chang-dong's New Project

Details of IM Kwon-taek and LEE Chang-dong's new films are still unknown. IM Kwon-taek's 101th film is only known as 'Korean Paper Project' and will be produced with financial support from Jeonju International Film Festival and Jeonju City Council. Next year marks the 10th anniversary of Jeonju International Film Festival and it is actively promoting the film as its opening film. The film is planned to



LEE Chang-dong's <Secret Sunshine> [2007]



IM Kwon-taek's <Beyond the years> (2007)

Director BONG has been interpreting genres as a way of understanding Korean society with his past films. With this tendency, <Mother> also will be a very different story with typical maternal love stories. BONG casted KIM Hae-ja not because he was interested in her gentle and soft image but because of her outrageous characteristics, and this makes the film look even more distinct.

To clear the son's false charge, the mother leaves her small cocoon town and throws herself into a seedy underworld. BONG said, "<Mother> will be my first film that does not describe a certain period in Korean society. I strongly wanted to focus on what the relationship between a mother and a son is," and this illustrates that he will keenly present the essentials of family relationship and dynamics. BONG showed his talent for picking commercial subject matter with <Memories of Murder> and <The Host>. <Mother> also has the potential to become a crowd pleaser and audience draw. <Mother> recently started shooting in numerous locales in Korea, just as he did for <Memories of Murder>.

CHOI Dong-hoon, a gifted storyteller and skillful director of genre films, such as <The Big Swindle> and <Tazza: The High Rollers>, has another highly anticipated film called <Jeon Woo Chi>. The film is derived from Korean folklore's 'Tale of Jeon Woo

publicize the beauty of Korean paper, one of the prides and joys of Jeonju, to the world. IM Kwon-taek, who has always explored Korean beauty and dignity in his films, is the right person for this Jeonju project. The director is working on the script, but many elements of the story haven't been revealed.

Also no information is known about LEE Chang-dong's new film, <Poetry> (working title), except for a short synopsis presented at Pusan Promotion Plan 2008. The film is said to be about a senior living with her grandson who is trying to complete a poem in a small city in Gyeonggi province. It is possible to speculate that LEE Chang-dong, who was at one point a novelist, will ask essential questions concerning the difference between literature and film as art forms.

BONG Joon-ho and CHOI Dong-hoon, who are recognized as artistically and commercially successful directors, are also preparing new films. BONG Joon-ho's new film <Mother> gained wide attention when he casted KIM Hae-ja, an actress well-known for playing mother figure, and top young actor WON Bin as a 28-year old son who is involved in a murder case and his mother who will fight for him.

*LEE Chang-dong's
<poetry> is said to be
about a senior living
with her grandson
who is trying to
complete a poem in a
small city.*



HONG Sansoo's <Woman on the Beach> (2006)

Chi', a fantasy tale about a hermit named Jeon Woo Chi tricking and punishing corrupted officials and saving the innocents. CHOI started his imaginative version of the story of Jeon Woo Chi by sealing the title character inside an ancient scroll for a crime he did not commit. Jeon Woo Chi is freed 500 years later when ghouls appear in contemporary Seoul and the nation is in a state of unrest. Yet due to the nature of his character, he's more into pulling pranks, drinking and womanizing than cleaning up ghouls. The time difference of 500 years should be an interesting twist for <Jeon Woo Chi>. The production just began with GANG Dong-won, one of the top actors in Korea, as title character, and LIM Soo-jung as Jeon Woo Chi's lover SUH In-gyung. In addition to two top stars, BAEK Yoon-sik, who has already worked with CHOI in his previous works, will appear as the master of Jeon Woo Chi in Joseon. In order to convey Jeon's spectacular magic and ghouls as realistic ally as possible, the production budget is close to \$10 million, a high figure by local standard.

HUR Jin-ho's New Love Story

One of the leading Korean directors HUR Jin-ho, who helmed <Christmas in August>, <One Fine Spring Day> and <Happiness>, is preparing his new



HUR Jin-ho's <Happiness> (2007)



ZHANG Lu's <Iri> (2008)

project <Hwa-jang> (working title), adopted from a short story of the same name by a famed Korean novelist KIM Hoon. It is a story of a man in his 40's whose wife is suffering from a brain tumor. The woman he once loved is no more than just skin and bones. At his office he falls in love with a new employee Eun-joo. He is thrown into a state of confusion as his love for Eun-joo and guilt towards his wife collide. Ultimately <Hwa-jang> is a story about love, betrayal, death and parting, just as his other films.

PARK Jin-pyo of <Too Young to Die> and <You Are My Sunshine> will also start shooting <My Love Beside Me> (working title) at the end of 2008. The film is about love and conflicts between a man with Lou Gehrig's disease and a woman who is tending him. Main casts are Hanryu star KWON Sang-woo and HA Ji-won. As director PARK Jin-pyo once was a documentary director, he will portray love with a physically frank approach.

ZHANG Lu, the director of <Grain in Ear> and <Iri>, is getting ready to shoot <Father> (working title). ZHANG is slowly moving away from his roots in Yanbian to Korea, and <Father> takes place around the Pusan International Film Festival. Ki-yong, who lives in Seoul, takes a trip down to Busan in order to take care of his dad who is suffering from Alzheimer's

disease. But his father thinks Ki-yong came to Busan to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming a director by participating in PIFF. Here, stories concerning Ki-yong's mother's suicide and his wife's call from a crashing plane intertwined with many lives involved.

PARK Chan-ok, who took a long break after the release of <Jealousy Is My Middle Name> in 2002, is coming back with her new film <Paju> (working title). <Paju> is a story of a woman who loved her brother-in-law for 7 years. It may feel similar to <Jealousy Is My Middle Name> in which a middle age man has an immoral relationship with a woman, and a young man who loves her, but <Paju> is more sensational and provocative. 15-year-old main female character CHOI Eun-mo falls in love with her older sister's boyfriend who is 7 years her senior. A few years later, he marries her sister and Eun-mo's crush turns into hatred. One day, her sister dies in an accident and Eun-mo starts to live with her brother-in-law. But she wonders how her brother-in-law is related to the death of her sister. Through this film PARK Chan-ok will tell a story about a rebellious libertine and someone who protects the libertine with love.

MOON Seok / Cine 21

Gyeongseong in the 1930s, Please Accept OUR LOVE

<Modern Boy> directed by JUNG Ji-woo



Director JUNG Ji-woo's new film <Modern Boy> has been released six months after its intended release last spring. Regarding this six-month delay, JUNG said, "It turned out that we needed more time to reset the whole film. We finally had enough time to do everything we could. We reshot some scenes that were originally a bit rushed because of the New Year vacation. In retrospect, April wasn't the right time for us at all. With other films featuring Gyeongseong released in that time, this might have been regarded as a similar film, and possibly also regarded as a bit rushed." JUNG who worked as editor on his previous film <Blossom Again>, again spent much of the six month period in the editing room, set up at Hongje-dong. Although people around him kept saying 'it's enough', with even his school senior, actor SUL Kyung-gu, trying to get him out, JUNG insisted. "I couldn't just leave those blemishes unattended to when I caught

them in the film," he explains. "The film became an addiction for me. During the editing process, I kept finding more flaws. Apart from my out sense of satisfaction in making improvements to the film, I thought I might die by doing this." Fortunately having survived, JUNG finished the editing job. JUNG said he was not anxious about the film-not out of too much self-confidence, but out of a sense of achievement and the knowledge that he did his best.

"I'll show the Gyeongseong in 5.1 channel." So far, the most impressive description I've heard about <Modern Boy> came not from the director but from LEE Jae-jin, the music director. The music in <Modern Boy> first came out from a phonograph, and was then changed for 5.1 surround sound.

"Probably, to people at that time, the sound from a phonograph might have been like how we feel about 5.1 channel sounds today. <Modern Boy> was intended to portray Gyeongseong

in 5.1 channel sound, rather than the mono version." In line with this, <Modern Boy> opened with actual film footage from Gyeongseong of the time. In those grainy black-and-white images, Gyeongseong can be seen as a city that had not only lost its color, but also had its emotions sucked out of it. The scene was slowly replaced by Hae-myung (PARK Hae-il) preparing himself for work in the morning. In the 'heightened' color screen, Hae-myung turns on the phonograph and makes coffee. Grabbing his cigarettes and a money clip, Hae-myung looks into a mirror and puts on a hat. Pleased with his appearance, he says, "Hmm, what a good looking guy am I." This sequence, beginning in black & white and changing into color, seems to express the director's enthusiasm for the Gyeongseong scenery he then unfolds. It also anticipates the director's intention to depict the characters of Gyeongseong.

Let's look at the panoramic view of

“In addition to presenting colorful Gyeongseong another desire has also been added.

I tried to insert a sense of twisted lives and unhappy moments.

I wanted to express the idea that it isn't right to accept the modernization theory from a one-sided perspective.”

Gyeongseong, fully reproduced on the wide 2.35:1 screen by the director. While Nan-sil (KIM Hye-soo) and Hae-myung were eating curry with Ogai (by KIM Yeong-jae), Nan-sil's male cousin at the Pyeonghwa restaurant on the rooftop of the Mitsubishi Department Store, a panoramic view of Gyeongseong's city center is shown at a glance. Rows of

compact buildings are revealed with every window lit up, with the roads between the buildings shining in the light of the street lamps. Streetcars and the people on the streets are busy moving about. The following shot reflects the heart of the city, with Hae-myung turning his back and heading home with Ogai. It shows revelers, cars in the streets, pavements and roadways, high tension wires lining the streets, and electric cars quietly passing by. As Hae-myung was showing off, Gyeongseong, re-created using CG, is also quite 'good looking'.

JUNG said, “In addition to presenting colorful Gyeongseong to the public, another desire has also been added.” What matters were the situations characters were put in within this attractive city. “Such a beautiful background has much more of an impact when combined with those beautiful people. However, I was afraid such an approach might be seen as supporting the so-called theory of Korean modernization through Japanese occupation. Therefore, I tried to insert a sense of twisted lives and unhappy moments in the film. It might sound

like just wordplay, but that's the way I wanted to express the idea that it isn't right to accept the modernization theory from a one-sided perspective through the imagery I had created. That was my second desire.” The director's intention has also been reflected in the fact that the CG used in <Modern Boy> regenerated the splendor of Gyeongseong as well as the reality of it.

The Sentiment of Gyeongseong

While the night scenes in <Modern Boy> were decorated in full color, the day shots were also brightly lit. Excluding people and cars, most of the background of Gyeongseong station, which was located near the current Daewoo Building, (opposite Seoul Station at the present time), was created with CG, so realistic that it accompanied a full-scale open set very effectively. Aiming to create “CG ally that few people would notice”, <Modern Boy> produces a wide range of magnificent spectacles. When Hae-myung was driving in his car looking for Nan-sil, Dongdaemun and its surrounding streets was completely reconstructed. The Japanese General Government Building in the final scene was generated with the detail of the external feel of material for the now-demolished Central Building. This was the most distinctive feature of <Modern Boy>, standing out from other rival films exploring Gyeongseong. Along with the physical construction of Gyeongseong as its background, the imagery was also a splendid reconstruction of the sentiment and culture of the times. The culture of Gyeongseong in <Modern Boy> was uncovered through the scene where Hae-myung was having a picnic with Shinsuke and some 'modern' girls, shown at the beginning of the film. In a picnic setting bearing some resemblance to Manet's <Luncheon on the Grass>, wine, dried persimmons, and slices of dried pollacks were spread out on the ground, while a gayageum (twelve-string Korean harp) was being played and soup being made. Gyeongseong, dotted with the meeting between the

East and West and the past and modernity, witnessed a particular sense of hedonism and an explosion of emotions.

The story of a modern boy who cared little for anything other than himself, found, despite the darkness of the times, the woman of his dreams and lost his sense of self over her, destroyed in the process. These are the stories of the times. After all, as the director mentioned, people at the center of this brilliant city in <Modern Boy> had no choice but to ruin themselves. JUNG pursued this feeling with great enthusiasm. The story, whose characters lie at the heart of the story, have heightened and intense feelings. That is partially because Gyeongseong is actually a character in the story. JUNG was also intent on making a change from his previous films. Another point of change might be noted through the use of music. Unlike his previous films, in which less popular, more sentimental music was used, <Modern Boy> features a more upfront and vibrant score. “Although it wasn't as complete as the Hollywood films that make the audience believe no single moment goes by without music, my focus was to let the music drive the emotions of the film to better help the audience understand the story.”

Apart from a couple of changes, <Modern Boy> is an intensified version of previous JUNG films. The director's approach was to focus on using very interesting actors and actresses. “It was my strong desire to let the actors do whatever they wanted. Now, this has become quite a dangerous status to assume. On several occasions, instead of stopping the shoot, I just enjoyed watching the actors and actresses work right up to rollout.” The use of handheld shots takes over some scenes for this reason, making the CG work more difficult. “In the end,” however, as JUNG proudly confides, “it became quite clear that the film was to become so much more about the joy of watching these tremendous actors.”

“PARK Hae-il really brought out Hae-myung's features, who was a peculiar character requiring the very best of acting skill. It was also interesting to



watch KIM Hye-soo reveal the true core of her character. I'm not sure if a film like this has been made before—maybe it has. But I think it is the first in Korea to genuinely express human sincerity in its deepest form. Whether the audience knew the leading actors or not, there are a great number of things to enjoy.”

A Coming-of-age Film before a Period Film

Besides the good looking city and the interesting actors, another point that makes <Modern Boy> worth watching is the theme of 'Severe Love' that JUNG has been talking about. In one of the scenes in the film, when Hae-myung was looking for Nan-sil, another character sympathetically says, “Ohh, if he stops there, it will remain as a romance...” Although <Modern Boy> is a story of a man who claimed to be a great romanticist, the scenery displayed throughout the film is too pitiful to be truly romantic. Like Min-gi, whose fury over his cheating wife in <Happyend> was so evident, or like In-young who faced questions about her ex-lover that suddenly reappeared in <Blossom Again>, Hae-myung in <Modern Boy> was a mere child who had no will to escape from his infatuation with his first love. According to director JUNG, Hae-myung is 'a boy who won't lie'. “He doesn't care what the world says about him and he cannot deceive his true desires. As long as he believes in what

he thinks, he doesn't care about fingers being pointed at him, nor worry if he looks stupid.” This was in relation with the ending of <Modern Boy>. In the novel 'Can you Live Without being Ruined or Dead?', on which the film was based, Hae-myung actually stopped pursuing his love, ending the affair ultimately as nothing more than a short romance. In the film version, Hae-myung doesn't stop running until the end. JUNG said <Modern Boy> is a kind of a coming-of-age film before it is a period film, a mystery, or a melodrama. “Of course, I don't think people change. But now I realize they don't change, but transform. Love seems to be like that.” What on earth would a man in search of his love find at the desperate end?

KANG Byeong-jin / Cine21





An Ordinary Young Man An Actor with a Thousand Faces

CHO Seung-woo in <Go Go 70s>

Some actors are cut out to be on the screen. Alain DELON was one of them, capturing the attention of everyone with his sculpted features. So was Gene KELLY and his mischievous maneuvers, and James DEAN, with his rebellious, yet lonely looks that fascinated many. Their souls jumped and jived within that rectangular frame. It seemed the screen was created just for them.

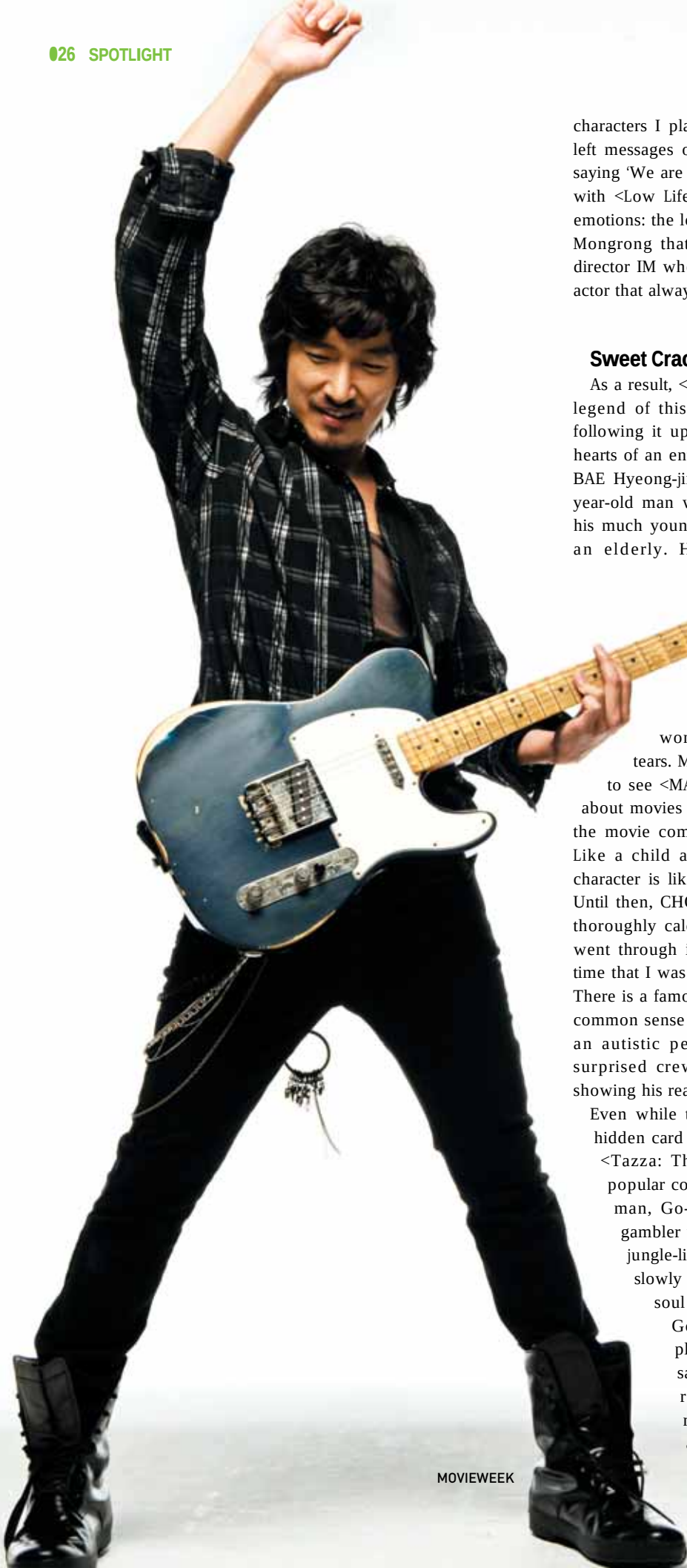
When I first spotted CHO Seung-woo, now a national star, I felt that sense of a refreshing soul from that familiar space called movies. Medium stature, boyish face, slim eyes, small lips... Speaking physically, the man was ever so small, yet when he enters the screen his gestures, his looks, his being itself changed. Compared to the power he has when he is himself, the force CHO as an actor lets out is so intense that even a full size screen is not big enough to close him in. In 2000, ever since he first stepped on the red carpets of Cannes with his debut film, <Chunhyang> (directed by IM Kwon-taek), he had already overcome his small features with his superb performance beyond his age. The screen was the ideal place for actor CHO to expand himself without limits, and there, he was truly free.

Debut to the Cannes

Despite all these descriptions, CHO had never dreamed of becoming a movie star. Influenced by his sister who is a musical actress, he has always wanted to be in the musicals. Instead of studying for college like any other students, he was famous for being disobedient during his high school years. Instead of books, his bag was full of musical CDs that he bought every chance he got, and spent his days on vocal lessons and trained to become a great musical actor. All this was before he met director IM Kwon-taek, one of Korean cinema's great masters. While in college, he attended an audition for <Chunhyang> without giving it much thought. There, his fate changed its course. While other auditionees prepared elaborate applications, CHO's application was just one B&W photo of him in everyday clothes, unshaven face and slant posture. Looking at this absurd photo, as if saying 'pick me or not, do whatever you want', director IM thought the young actor was bold and challenging, and became a fan of him instantly. Starring in IM's film meant a shortcut to a bright future as an actor, which meant there were many other aspiring actors like him. CHO Seung-woo has never dreamed that he would be that lucky actor. "I did not even notice they

were calling my name when they announced the actor for Mongryong. Only when a friend next to me shook my shoulders I realized it was me. Bewildered, I stepped forward and all these reporters roamed in, showering me with camera flashes." Like that, 18-year old CHO became an instant movie star. Being a new discovery of director IM, the concentration he got was intense and he was given the honor of attending Cannes with his debut film.

This unexpectedly immense attention became a hurdle he had to overcome. "After <Chunhyang>, there weren't any more offers for me." It was due to the 'antique' image he got from starring in a period drama. "There was no casting offer at all. That's when I started to have doubts about keeping this job as an actor." The answer CHO reached to overcome this harsh time of unrest was the theater and musical stages he has always admired. Leaving the central movie hub of Chungmuro, he stepped into the world of theater. There, he saved himself from the deep pit of 'Mongryong' by acting as the beggar, madman, and in other roles. From there on, the life he led was the result of actor CHO's consciousness and efforts to free himself from <Chunhyang>. He let the world know he is a man now by taking the main role in first love tale <Wanee and Junah> (directed by KIM Yong-gyun, 2001), but the real transformation came with <Who Are You?> (directed by CHOI Ho). In the film, CHO Seung-woo took the role of Hyeong-tae, a young CEO managing a start-up game company, who falls in love with a woman working in the same building and asks her to join him in his game world. It was Hyeong-tae that finally led CHO into the real world. As a serial killer in <H> (2002) he tried to break his precious image and in <The Classic> (2003), a melodrama directed by KWAK Jae-yong, he showed his ability to play a young heartthrob in the role of Jun-ha, whose first love is never realized. Just when people thought CHO had finally found his own colors, he reinvented himself with <Low Life> (2004), another collaboration with IM Kwon-taek, the man who brought him into the world of movies. It was a challenging job for CHO to play CHOI Tae-woong, a man who lived through the age of turmoil from the late 1950s to the military regimes of the early 1970s. He had to acquaint himself with the matured atmosphere of a man in his 30's, which he hasn't even experienced yet, and turn into a foul-mouthed, rough fellow destroying everything in his path. It was nothing like the gentle image he has built up until then. "I think many were disappointed in me. People thought I am like the



MOVIEWEEK

characters I played, pure and kind, and felt betrayed. Many left messages on my fan website, turning their back on me saying ‘We are disappointed in you.’” But challenging himself with <Low Life> was a choice he made from a mixture of emotions: the love and hatred he had with <Chunhyang> and Mongrong that dragged him on for so long, gratitude for director IM who recognized CHO’s talents, and instinct as an actor that always makes him thirsty for a new challenge.

Sweet Cracker

As a result, <Low Life> was the turning point for CHO. The legend of this small giant CHO Seung-woo began there, following it up with <MARATHON> (2005) that moved the hearts of an entire country. Based on real life story of autistic BAE Hyeong-jin, CHO took on the role of Cho-won, a 25-year-old man with a mind of a 5-year-old. When talking to his much younger brother he speaks politely as if talking to an elderly. He dances

strangely in public. The only thing he is good at is running the marathons. On screen CHO delivered the pure heart of Cho-won, the happiness he feels when he runs. Together with Cho-won, the audience fully felt his happiness and tears. More than 5 million people went to the theaters to see <MARATHON>, making it one of the most talked about movies of that year. CHUNG Yoon-chul who directed the movie compared CHO Seung-woo to a ‘sweet cracker’. Like a child and like a villain, it seemed this two-faced character is like a cracker that can be eaten with anything. Until then, CHO was known as an actor who acts based on thoroughly calculated plans. He explained the changes he went through in <MARATHON> by saying “It was the first time that I was so not conscious of the camera while acting.” There is a famous anecdote of CHO acting rude and ignoring common sense on the set in order to get into the character of an autistic person. This sudden change of personality surprised crew and staff on the set, thinking CHO was showing his real personality.

Even while the shock from <MARATHON> lingered, the hidden card he had up his sleeve was the role of Go-ni in <Tazza: The High Rollers> (2006), an adaptation of popular comic by HUR Young-man. Once a naive young man, Go-ni turns into a ‘high roller’, a professional gambler who indulges in betting his luck. In this nasty, jungle-like world where money makes money, Go-ni slowly falls into the dark swamp that swallows up his soul as he comes into contact with other gamblers. Go-ni is unlike any other character CHO has played, and there were many objections. “Many said that this was a miscasting when I got the role. Supposedly, I was unfit to play a masculine character like Go-ni since I have always taken roles with a fine appearance and naïve personality.” But director CHOI Dong-

hoon had CHO in mind from the very beginning, when he started writing the script. “I wrote the script imagining, what will it be like for that naïve face to suddenly change and be filled with malicious aura?” The sweet young man from <Who Are You?>, <The Classic> and <Love Phobia> was gone, and kind-hearted Cho-won from the <MARATHON> vanished. That 5-year-old had already grown into a real ‘man’. Before the production began, CHO wasn’t even familiar with how to hold cards properly, but by practicing day and night (even while eating and resting), his hands could splendidly move like a true gambler. Through CHO Seung-woo, Go-ni and his creepy smiles became a notable character in Korean film history, and CHO had grown tremendously so that will be remembered forever in his acting career.

Rock ‘n’ Roll Icon of the ‘70s

Recently, he has returned to the ‘70s with shoulder-length hair, colorfully printed shirts, and old leather jackets. CHO stars as the lead vocalist Sang-kyu in <Go Go 70s>, a story about the Devils, the first Korean soul band. Back in the day when there were public curfews at night and when long hair and mini-skirts were forbidden, clubs were the escape route for freedom-craving youths. Sang-kyu who bet his entire life on soul music is an icon that represents the youths of that time. <Go Go 70s> is the second collaboration with director CHOI Ho, who saved him from the images of <Chunhyang> by casting CHO in <Who Are You?>. Although he knows nothing about playing a guitar, CHO began practicing with a real band, living in the Hongdae area, a mecca for indie music. Practicing alone took 3 months before the shooting began. Even during the shoot, on his days off he could be found at the studio rehearsing, spending a total of 8 months as a musician. To absorb in the irregular life of the band, he gained 8 kilograms, and as his guitar skills improved, as the number of his guitars grew to 15, more and more of CHO became Sang-kyu. “By taking on the role of Sang-kyu I have changed quite a bit. It’s not like my previous works, where I go crazy and go to the end, or where actor CHO Seung-woo gets the entire spotlight. I simply acted naturally, like our film.”

The naturalness that comes from reflecting a youthful self who has just passed through his 20’s, moving on to the 30’s right now, at this moment. Unpretentious acting in <Go Go 70s> is a refreshing challenge that he has not attempted in his 20’s. During 10 years of his acting career, he has grown into a major class actor in musicals as well, while becoming a role model for younger actors. At this point, he wants to reset all the praises and images he has earned until now. “I was lucky since my debut. Thanks to my luck, it is fortunate I have never heard criticisms about my acting. I still have much to learn.” He worries some overestimate him, making it seem he is greater than the actual ‘CHO Seung-woo’. He says he wishes to throw that out and work as if he has just began the job. Now at the end of his 20’s, he looks back at the last 10 years, those days that he has raced through without resting once. Then even when he is about to take a short break, he makes promises that he will return with another piece of

work in the end. “The script I choose? Some of them are so hard to just flip to the next page, and some are so interesting that the story comes to an end without my awareness. When I feel the story is interesting, that means I am half way there in selecting that script. At times like that, I already picture the scenes in my head. My face is already there in that character. Pieces that are worth challenging, those with many bumps to overcome are the ones I welcome at all times.” While <Go Go 70s> is hitting the theaters, CHO is in the midst of shooting <The Last Empress> (working title), a historical piece with its time set at around the fall of Joseon dynasty, directed by KIM Yong-gyun whom CHO has worked with in <Wanee and Junah>. In the movie he is a warrior guarding Empress Myeongseong, who is killed by the Japanese imperialists. As he prepares for another role that’ll undergo a radical transformation, it’ll be curiously shocking to see him embodying another character on the screen.

LEE Hwa-jung / Cine21



FILM 2.0

People

PIFF'S KIM DONG-HO AWARDED

Pusan International Film Festival (PIFF) disclosed that PIFF director KIM Dong-ho received the Nielsen Impact Award, an annual award in recognition of contributions to entertainment media by the Nielsen Company which includes the Hollywood Reporter. Hollywood Reporter publisher and Nielsen Media Entertainment Vice President Eric MIKA said, "We are pleased to present this award to KIM Dong-ho for the 'Impact' he has personally made in bringing Korean films to the world and, in doing so, bridging cultures and promoting tolerance and understanding."

KIM has been PIFF director for thirteen years leading the festival from its modest beginnings into one of the leading international film festivals in the world. KIM is currently also vice-chairman of the Network for Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC).



RAIN TURNS INTO A HOLLYWOOD ROMANTIC LEAD

Rain (JUNG Ji-hoon) seems likely to turn into a global star through cinema. The pan-Asian pop sensation 'Bi' (Korean word for 'rain') revealed in a television interview that he is contemplating two Hollywood roles as his next project. One is a romantic comedy and the other is an action film. Rain said that he can't disclose which films they are, but that both films are interesting.

He also said that <Speed Racer> was a great way to make his name internationally, but that his main interest was to work with the Wachowski brothers. Rain's next film will be the Wachowski brothers produced <Ninja Assassin>. Rain also talked about his singing career and that he will release a new album in October.



PARK CHAN-WOOK'S <OLD BOY>, NAMED 64TH GREATEST FILM OF 'ALL TIME'

The UK's most popular film magazine, 'Empire', published its list of the top 500 films of all time, placing PARK Chan-wook's acclaimed thriller <Old Boy> 64th in the rankings. For the list, 'Empire' polled more than 150 directors, including Quentin TARANTINO and Mike LEIGH, as well as 50 film critics and more than 10,000 readers of the magazine. PARK's film was the only Korean feature in the top 500. Released locally in 2003, <Old Boy> won the 2004 Cannes Grand Prize, drawing wide acclaim and a large following for the director.

Director PARK is currently in production on his latest thriller, <Thirst> a tale of a priest-turned-vampire caught up in an erotic tryst with his best friend's wife. Universal Pictures (UPI) and London-based Focus Features recently came aboard the CJ Ent-driven project as investors and co-producers.



CRITICS JUDGE LEE CHANG-DONG'S <SECRET SUNSHINE> AS 2007'S BEST FILM

LEE Chang-dong's <Secret Sunshine> is voted the best film of 2007 by a select group of Korean culture and society critics. KIM Ji-hoon's <May 18> came in second and LEE Myung-Se's <M> completes an illustrious top three of in total twelve selected Korean films. <Secret Sunshine> continued to cement LEE's name among the great auteur cineastes. The film accumulated numerous awards, culminating in JEON Do-yeon's best actress crown at Festival de Cannes.



HA JUNG-WOO AND SU AE ARE TOMORROW'S STARS

PIFF's fourth Premiere Star Summit event selected Su Ae (<Sunny>) as the female Rising Star and HA Jung-woo (<The Chaser>) received the male Rising Star award. HA cemented his name internationally through highly praised independent films which were selected throughout the world by film festivals. His breakthrough was <The Unforgiven> and he topped the box office this year with the sleeper hit <The Chaser>, another film coveted by global film festivals.

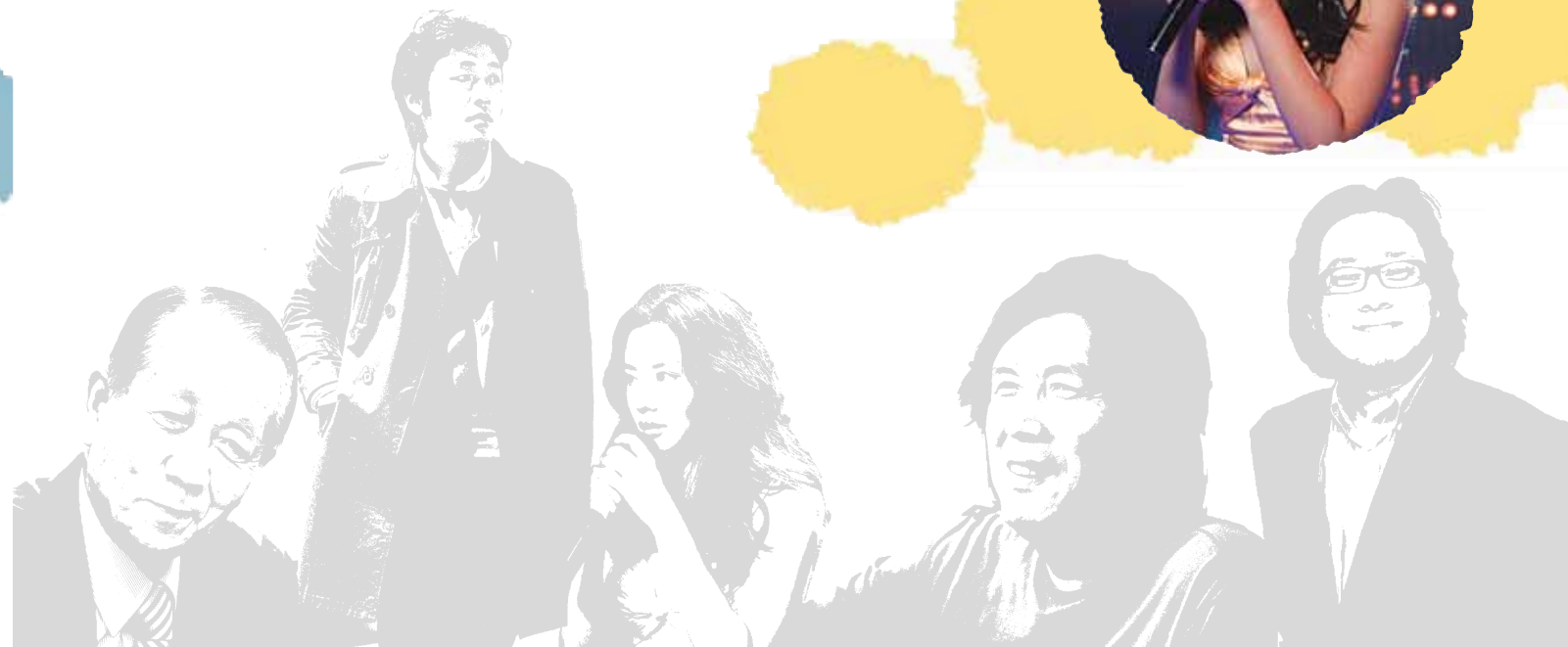
Su Ae played LEE Byung-hun's character's love interest in <Once in a Summer>. In <Sunny> she transforms from a modest quiet young woman into a singer performing in front of soldiers during the Vietnam War while being in search of her missing-in-action husband.



KIM A-JUNG CAST IN THE CONTROVERSIAL <29 YEARS>

Actress KIM A-jung, who rose to national celebrity status last year with her debut role in <200 Pounds Beauty>, will star alongside RYOO Seung-bum (<Arahan>, <Bloody Tie>) in <29 Years>, a film adaptation of a controversial comic series by Kang Pul ('A.P.T.'). The story centers on a former soldier with a guilty conscience after his taking part, 29 years earlier, in the Gwangju Massacre, a real-life tragic episode in Korean history, in which state troops were ordered to open fire on civilians in the city, killing thousands. The former soldier, played by RYOO, sets out to assassinate the person suspected of ordering the massacre, namely former Korean president CHUN Doo-hwan.

YI Ch'ang-ho, Nigel D'SA / KOFIC



؛ Treat it as Fantasy Melodrama ؛ –

LEE Yoon-ki, director of <My Dear Enemy>

Except for <Love Talk>, all of your films are based on novels.

Making a film out of a novel makes it easy to establish the main theme, as the novel has already established the purpose of the story, so I do prefer working with short stories than screenplays. The real challenge is to add details to the story while keeping the theme intact. I am getting better at this, though.

The film is quite mysterious, with many parts of it never directly revealed to the audience. We don't know what the characters in the film do for a living or why they broke up.

The original novel focused on the psychological description of Hee-soo. I decided not to outline too much information about all the characters in the film. I believe <My

Dear Enemy> is a kind of road movie in which Hee-soo takes a journey in search of her ego. Without a detailed explanation, I hoped the audience would go along with her on her journey and naturally accept the other characters as they are.

You seem to enjoy getting actors to play against type. Did you try to get something new out of JEON Do-youn in this film?

She wasn't trying to be too surprising in <My Dear Enemy>. One thing peculiar about Hee-soo is that she has very few facial expressions. She rarely laughs. But you have to remember that the actress JEON Do-youn exudes a bright smile. Usually, this enhances the image of the films she is in, but she remained sulky throughout <My Dear Enemy>. Due to her constant grumpiness, presenting subtle feelings was

the most important task for Hee-soo with her limited facial expressions. Her performance had to be more muted, making it quite a challenge for her.

Byoung-woon isn't an easy character either. He might be seen by some as a shallow playboy.

In real life, people like Byoung-woon must be truly bad guys. But people like him are quite common in life. At first, he was like a man who spoke nonsense, who kept his distance, and who enjoyed entertaining the people around him. Byoung-woon is not only a character who everyone universally likes, but also somewhat of a Tinkerbell, a fictional character from a fairytale.

Depictions of Women

From <This Charming Girl> on, you have been known for your delicate depictions of women.

As I'm a man, a woman is more likely to be target of my interest. Not 'femininity' but a woman herself is my primary interest. The two are definitely different. I'm not interested in discussing women's social status or the difficulties they face so much as women themselves. From a feminist's perspective, my films no doubt have a great many flaws.

This was not your first film to explore an ordinary woman that suddenly meets a man that gives her hope.

I thought one day I might become a target for that question when I was looking back at my work. I set up the male character as the medium in the story. In real life, of course, it is quite unlikely for these things to happen like this. <My Dear Enemy> is a story about a man who gave a woman so much despair, although it isn't all she gets from him.

Strictly speaking, we can't say that <My Dear Enemy> has a happy ending. You always try to give us hope, but it is quite a tricky conclusion too. Why didn't you let the characters end more happily?

Because that's the reality of life. A film doesn't always need to be realistic, but these days too many films exaggerate reality. And all those stories of mine wouldn't fit into happy-ending storylines anyway.

<My Dear Enemy> is quite a controversial melodrama.

There is the belief that you can't have a melodrama without a love story between a man and a woman. But films like <Before Sunrise> and <Before Sunset> couldn't be categorized as melodramas then, right? I think <My Dear Enemy> is true to the melodrama genre. It just had a different approach. I would define <My Dear Enemy> as a 'fantasy melodrama'. It is a likely event but quite an extraordinary story in terms of real life.

The film was shot entirely in Seoul. Did this make finding locations difficult?

70% of it was shot in Yongsan, where I live now. Yongsan is one of very few places in Korea where simplicity and



<My Dear Enemy>

antiquity sit side by side. I tried to look for places that would give the audience a glimpse of old-fashioned Seoul, and to create cinematic qualities for the film.

The film's English title 'My Dear Enemy' sounds interesting.

More literally translated titles, like 'One Fine Day' or 'Beautiful Day', were too plain. I once came across a memo from an old diary, saying 'My Dear Enemy'. This was a title, actually, that I've always wanted to use for a film. I chose it for this film, even with the paradoxical meaning.

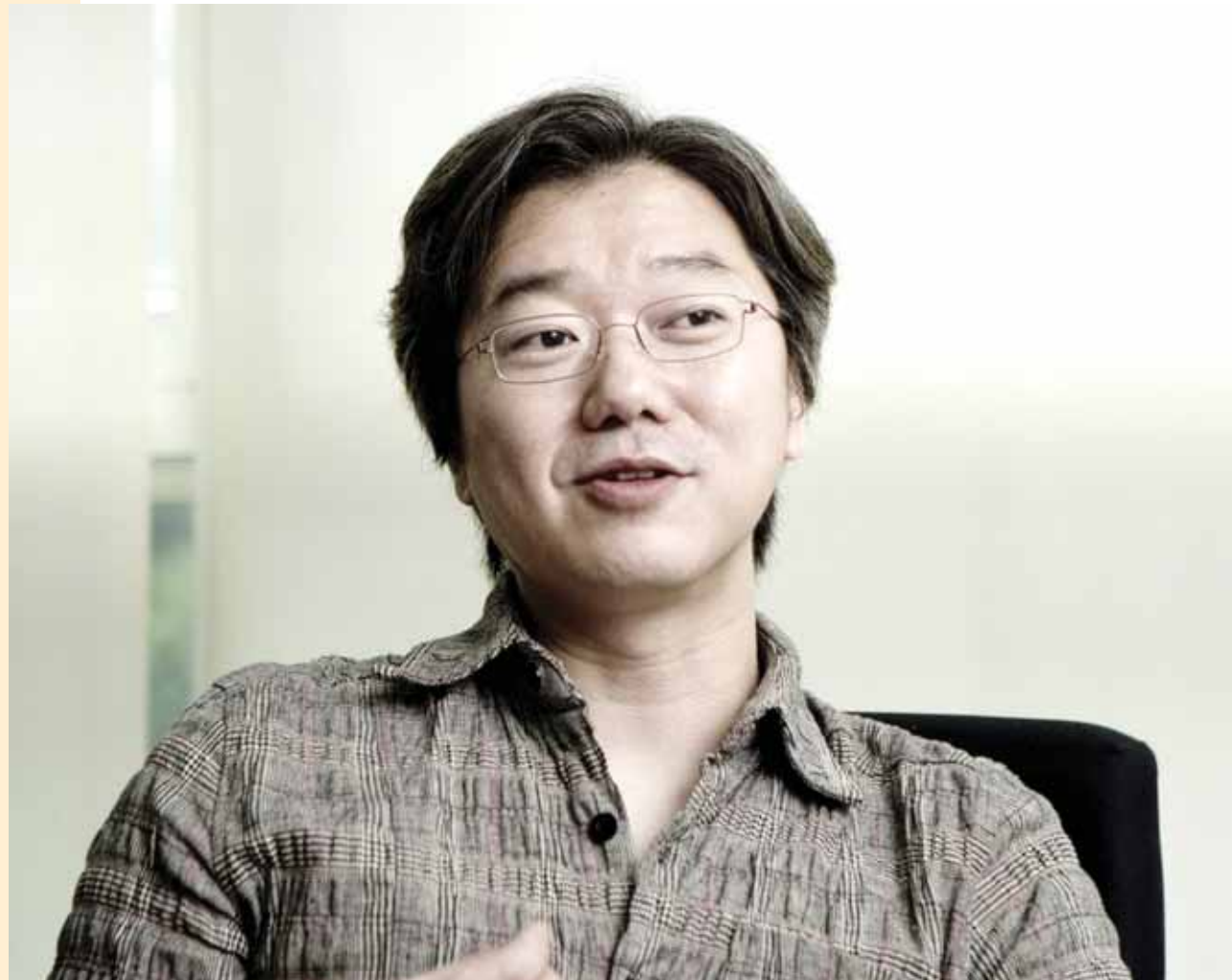
KANG Bo-ra / FILM2.0

؛ Because that's the reality of life.
A film doesn't always need to be realistic,
but these days too many films exaggerate reality.
And all those stories of mine wouldn't fit into happy-ending storylines anyway. ؛ –



Feel the Soul in Your Heart –

CHOI Ho, director of <Go Go 70s>



FILM 2.0

I learned that there were books called *Archaeology of Korean Pop: 1960s* and *Archaeology of Korean Pop: 1970s*, published by Hangil Art, and those books were where you got your inspiration from.

The books are collections of articles about Korean popular music in the 1960s and 1970s, published in a famous music web-magazine called 'Weiv' (www.weiv.co.kr). I think it was about three or four years ago when I read those two books and contacted the author, SHIN Hyun-joon.

What part of the book was so fascinating?

Stories about Korean popular music in 1970s have been an interesting subject among those directors who love music. Director KIM Hong-joon told me, "Everyone gathered at the club around midnight, from factory workers to college students. We locked the door during the curfew hours and

went crazy in there all night." I thought it was ironic that you are free to go in but can't leave until 4 in the morning because of the curfew. And I thought I could make an interesting story out of it.

Why did you decide to focus on 'The Devils'?

The Devils fused soul, rock and traditional Korean music. And I assume that's how it was in those days, trying to cultivate or develop something new. Considering the fact that Korean rock music was born and developed in 1970s, which was the decade of cultural modernization, I thought what The Devils had to go through was a good representation of that era.

The Devils were famous for their soul music. Not just soul as music, also emphasizing soul in a spiritual way.

When I learned The Devils was a soul band and what the word soul meant, I understood the culture of soul in 70s Korea. That's why the theme of <Go Go 70s> is 'Young people in 2008, get your soul.'

The word soul also meant 'cool' at that time, a popular slang we use openly nowadays. When someone says "He has a soul", it means he's cool and if someone says "He doesn't have a soul", it means he's not so cool. When I learned that The Devils was a soul band and what the word soul meant, I understood the culture of soul in 70s Korea. That's why the theme of <Go Go 70s> is "Young people in 2008, get your soul".

Not Like 'MTV'

There are two huge concert scenes in the middle of the movie and at the end. It seems like you focused on making it look like a real live stage.

I wanted one thing for both concert scenes. I didn't want any visuals reminding people of MTV stuff. I saw live recordings of Wilson Pickett on YouTube and documentaries about Woodstock as references. I realized that they were filmed in 16mm on location, live and raw, recording and shooting at the same time. So I told the director of photography, KIM Byeong-seo, that we are not using cranes and not going to do anything polished when we are shooting.

Is that why you hired many directors for photography, including CHO Yong-gyu (<Secret Sunshine>), LEE Mo-gae (<The Good, The Bad, The Weird>), KIM Ji-yong (<A Bittersweet Life>)?

For the first concert scene, I used 6 cameras and 10 cameras for the ending concert scene. I was nervous because we don't get to see the editing right away since we used so many cameras, and can't be sure about the end result. So it was an experiment for me in a way. I was shooting other scenes after shooting the first concert scene when the editor showed me a rough cut of the first concert scene. It felt raw and kind of old-fashioned. And I said 'awesome'. That's when I gained my confidence back to shoot the final concert scene with 10 cameras.

I felt a bit strange when I was watching those concert scenes, since the two actors, CHO Seung-woo and CHA Seung-woo, playing The Devils, are second generation

musicians.

It was my ground rule that I want actors who can actually play music and we auditioned many musicians for that. I was surprised to know that almost 60% of them were second generation musicians. When we finally picked those two actors, we were quite happy and joked that this film is baptized in the blood of the 1970s.

I guess all those details brought the synergy into the concert scenes and made it look so real. Did you want to put special meaning in to the concert scenes?

Great performances are powerful and they bring out another energetic me while I'm watching. I feel like many young people in Korea seems tired and exhausted. I hope they can feel the heat of great performances with this movie and have some time to refresh themselves.

Some people are saying that the ending concert scene could be interpreted as a way of young-blooded resistance to the military regime.

I wasn't considering that or aiming for that. This film is about the period between 1972 and December 1975. December of 1975 was when the military regime imprisoned many musicians and artists, accusing them of smoking marijuana. And there's a scene where the members of The Devils are going to a public bath, and the scenes before that was where I talked about the cultural upheaval of 1970s. The ending concert scene is sort of my personal filmic dedication to 1970s.

HUH Nam-woong / FILM2.0

A Grand Feast of Korean Films Just for You

Korean Films at American Film Market 2008

What have Korean films accomplished in 2008? AFM 2008 will be the place where you can see all the achievements that Korea films have made this year. With new and various experiments, Korean films tried to extend beyond their territory in many ways. First of all, there are a number of films based on historical facts with the creative interpretation of the directors. And there are some films making innovative attempts in existing genre forms. We also discovered a prominent documentary that rises beyond our wildest expectations. Here is an introduction to Korean films at AFM.





Director KIM Tae-kyun
Cast CHA In-pyo, SHIN Myoung-cheol
International Sales Finecut Co., Ltd.

A Hardship Drama about a Defecting North Korean Family <CROSSING>

<Crossing> is about a family of North Korean defectors. Based on the true stories of 25 North Korean defectors that walked into the Spanish Embassy in Beijing in 2002, <Crossing> focuses on their life hardships and their escape from poverty and hunger. Yong-soo (CHA In-pyo), living in Hamgyeong-do, was an ordinary exemplary North Korean citizen. Once awarded a medal from his Dear Leader for his contribution to the community as a local soccer player, he worked hard at a coal mine to feed his 11 year-old-son, Joon (SHIN Myoung-cheol) and his wife (SEO Young-hwa). But it wasn't enough to support his family. When his pregnant wife became ill with TB, Yong-soo decided to go to China to get medicine and food. His wife died at home in North Korea, and his son left for China to find Yong-soo.

The melodramatic tragedy of this family is quite evident. The father and then his son crossed a river of no return. Arriving in a foreign country, they were vulnerable and missed each other. Yong-soo and Joon were extremely good natured. <Crossing> depicts a family who involuntarily parted as a 'penalty' for their inability to meet the minimum needs in life, and, as such is true to the form of the melodrama genre. As shown in his previous films, <Romance of Their Own> (2004) and <A Millionaire's First Love> (2006), KIM Tae-kyun is well known as a melodrama director. <Crossing> is a result of the combination between smooth direction and a script based on a good-natured heart. <Crossing> shows fear toward the society that created such

tragedy, rather than blames it, moving the audience with the human struggle rather than through overly political undertones.

In <Crossing>, the most faithful actor in his ability to express sorrow is SHIN Myoung-cheol, who played Joon. The unsophisticated country boy, without formal acting training, performs with the subtle honesty and quietness of genuine human grief. Due to the humanitarian intentions of any story dealing with North Korean defectors, it is difficult to criticize <Crossing>. The young SHIN's performance did stand out as particularly powerful, however.

Filmed in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia and the cornfields in Liaoning in China, <Crossing> finds a wonderful lyricism with its beautiful scenery and music. Although the scene in which Joon and Mi-seon (JOO Da-young) were riding bicycles across the reed field in the glow of the sunset is rather unsuited to the story, it was a uniquely glowing moment. The same might be said of the scene in which Joon was practicing soccer with a rock under a bridge in the rain. The melody of the cello duet will last long in the audiences' memories.

PARK Hye-myung / Cine21



Director LEE Yoon-ki
Cast JEON Do-youn, HA Jung-woo
International Sales Finecut Co., Ltd.

A Trip to the Traces of Love <MY DEAR ENEMY>

They said goodbye to each other one year ago. Though they had fallen in love, Hee-soo (JEON Do-youn) and Byoung-woon (HA Jung-woo) have now become a debtee and a debtor, respectively. In a lighter setting in the film, one Saturday morning while watching a horse race, Byoung-woon's former girlfriend Hee-soo suddenly appears before him, saying "Pay me your debts." She insists on his paying her 3.5 million won, the amount he borrowed from her under the pretext of funding a business. Having no money to give her, he decides to resolve the debt in his own way.

LEE Yoon-ki's <My Dear Enemy>, an adaptation of Azuko TAIRA's short story, begins with a debtee and a debtor wandering around Seoul trying to resolve a debt problem. It ends the same way. Superficially, the film is a series of awkward and nonsensical travel sketches, but its conclusions are not about 3.5 million won, but the traces of the two former lovers: a restaurant often frequented by them, memories in which they walked under an umbrella on a rainy day, the moments they shared music headphones with each other, and their last farewell, ending in "Sorry". <My Dear Enemy> is a melodrama that develops the romance in a different way from normal melodramas.

LEE Yoon-ki's films always take care of the agony or anguish in close-minded people, with a careful and warm attention. Hee-soo is more talkative than Jeong-hye (<This Charming Girl>) or Bo-gyeong (<Ad Lib Night>), but she is also broken-hearted. As

the day passes away, with tears hidden in the cold attitude forming in her mind on the subway, the glow of the sunset hits her face. Filmed on HD like <Ad Lib Night>, <My Dear Enemy> is a busy and rhythmical road movie on the one hand, yet it creates many philosophical blank spaces on the other. These spaces will be filled with our happy memories. Though also having enough familiar moments of catharsis, the film will be soothing for those hardened and narrowed by the difficulties of life.

<My Dear Enemy> is also a film that demonstrates the close and secret performance abilities of actress JEON Do-youn once again. At first glance, a leading figure in the film seems to be HA Jung-woo. This is not the case. The film is driven by Hee-soo, who says to herself, "I wanted to scold you to the fullest," as she looks at the ground with Byoung-woon, when she is about to say goodbye to him at sunset. JEON behaves so sluggishly she makes people doubt or misunderstand her, as if she is not actually performing her part. Her intention, however, is to do things very naturally. The film has so many things we might overlook. The more attention we pay, the more JEON takes the initiative. The astonishing aftertaste makes one feel like they would never forget this film.

PARK Hye-myung / Cine21



Director KIM Ki-duk
Cast LEE Na-young, Joe ODAGIRI
International Sales Showbox/Mediaplex, Inc.

Philosophical View on What We Call 'Love'

<DREAM>

KIM Ki-duk's 15th feature <Dream> received great media attention when high profile Korean and Japanese actors got together: LEE Na-young and Joe ODAGIRI. Jin (Joe ODAGIRI) sees himself in a dream meeting his ex-girlfriend every night and whenever he has that dream, Ran (LEE Na-young) has to face her shattered relationship while sleepwalking. Jin's obsessive dream forces Ran to go through painful memories that she doesn't want to remember anymore. Jin's dream is Ran's nightmare in her real life. To resolve this predicament, Jin and Ran attempt to do the almost impossible: stay awake.

<Dream> unfolds a story of tragic love and its destiny. Ran's therapist states that Jin and Ran are united as one person; when one of them is happy, the other will be miserable. So she recommends they fall in love with each other so that the dream can go away and Ran's sleepwalking can get better. But their love is destined to fail as they watch each other sink into their own world and are not able to fall asleep together forever. The destiny of their love is cruel and harsh as if one person is always trapped in a mirror, they are only able to watch and can't do anything more.

As he did with his past films, <Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring> (2003), <3-Iron> (2004) and <Time> (2006), the director puts noticeable efforts into showing the traditional Korean beauty and <Dream> is full of dream-like images based on Orientalism.

The presentation of the two main characters was rather

straightforward in the beginning but it became extremely confusing with so many metaphors as the story progressed. The film may look like a melodrama about a couple drawn to each other by a dream, but the philosophical conclusion rises with messages of 'destruction' and 'redemption'. The scene with Jin, Ran and their former lovers in a field of reeds implies that love wrought from intense desires has its limits. People dream about perfect unions with others through love while being jealous and having mistrust, but people can never embrace others as they do themselves because they are too caught up with themselves. But as the director has always done, he remembers to leave open one escape route with a message of redemption amidst this desolate conclusion.

The symbolic image for this film is dreaming of a butterfly, which comes from a metaphor by Chuang-tzu, a well-known ancient Chinese philosopher. His famous question ; "Am I dreaming of a butterfly or is a butterfly dreaming of me? ;" corresponds with the director's philosophy of regarding destruction in the same light as redemption and implying a positive view of this world. The director once more shows his philosophical attitude towards something that one can never really know and sometimes we just wonder whether it really exists. And this time that something is what we call 'love'.

KANG Bo-ra / FILM2.0



Director CHONG Yunsu
Cast SON Ye-jin, KIM Joo-hyuck
International Sales CJ Entertainment Inc.

The Double Marriage of One Woman and Two Men

<MY WIFE GOT MARRIED>

A story adapted from a popular novel written by PARK Hyeon-uk, <My Wife Got Married> is actually a jolly parody of weekend TV series that repeat the same old stories all the time. A man keeps a mistress, and the wife, after fighting with that mistress for a long while, ends up forming a new, bizarre relationship with that mistress, calling each other 'sister'. This double-sided theme of the 'fate of the women' is what we have been seeing on our TV for as long as we can remember. This is where <My Wife Got Married> gets our attention, because here, the roles each gender plays in the relationship are totally reversed. From the beginning the husband insists he will not have a divorce, cowardly hoping the child is his on the side. The wife's thoughtless new husband is simply happy, calling the original husband 'brother'.

Rather than sending out messages to abolish double marriage, or polyandry, the movie looks at all these events with a 'cool' attitude, just as another piece of life. Such an attitude creates synergy that is expressed in the main characters' love for soccer. It is obvious they have put much effort into the production process, the magnificent introduction and scene compositions. This makes for a curious feeling of peeping into the life of newly-weds, the couple played by SON Ye-jin and KIM Joo-hyuck, the two actors who are in an age fit for marriage in real life as well.

In-ah (SON Ye-jin) is admired by all men in her company, for her beautiful looks, excellent job performance, and endless

affection for soccer. By chance, Deok-hoon (KIM Joo-hyuck) the shy guy has a drink with In-ah and soon the relationship becomes intimate. The love begins as In-ah, a die-hard fan of Spain soccer Primera Liga club FC Barcelona, and Deok-hoon, a big fan of their rival club, Real Madrid, start their conversation on the subject of soccer. Yet In-ah claims although she loves Deok-hoon, it is not that he is the 'only one' she loves, and that she wishes to live loving many 'other people'. Deok-hoon considers separating with her, but in the end, by convincing In-ah, succeeds in marrying her. The happy days last only shortly. As In-ah, is transferred to another city, they are together only on the weekends, and soon enough she finds another man. Then she announces she will marry him as well.

The original novel begins and ends with soccer. Among such praises of soccer, it was a fresh shock to have a story that can embrace even the peculiarity of life found in double marriage as a common positive factor. Just like it is indifferent for Club Real Madrid's goalie Casillas, whom Deok-hoon can't worship enough, to play against Korea with the Spanish national team during the 2002 World Cups, life is light as feathers, and vain. While faithfully following the original story's narratives, the film is centered on SON's character. That will be the biggest difference from the original's atmosphere, and actually the most important and substantial point to appreciate in this movie.

JU Sung-chul / Cine21



Director KIM Jung-kwon
Cast LEE Dong-wook, Eugene
International Sales STUDIO2.0

Her Secret Is Hidden on a Page 198 of the Book

<HEARTBREAK LIBRARY>

<Heartbreak Library>, a story of healing broken hearts and of finding a new love set in a library where toms of books hiding secrets in each page, is a perfect film for theatres in autumn. Like <Love Story> (2006) and <Philadelphia> (1993), in which library appears as a unique place for great story, it captures every corner of this unique place as romantic as it can be.

The film starts with voice of Jun-oh (LEE Dong-wook), who is like everyday guy wearing business suit in daytime but only a cast on his hand is out of his look. An afternoon in the library, he strangely tears off one page from books in search for a page 198 of a certain book where his girlfriend left lines saying her feelings for him, only he doesn't know its title. Following his searching for page, the film unfolds what kind of person Jun-oh is, where his girlfriend is gone and what was her true intention, mainly from a curiosity of Eun-soo (Eugene), a librarian who sympathizes herself to him and ends up with helping him.

Appearing far from simple Cinderella story or stereotypical tearjerkers by its using techniques of mystery genre, <Heartbreak Library> can be called as a 'mystery romance' following traces in search of love, like <Definitely, Maybe> where a girl tries to find her father's first love, and <Mamma Mia!>, a story of seeking for real father. However, the film does not stay in classic 'whodunit' structure. The mystery page 198 that Jun-oh and Eun-soo seek for is not the narrative goal, rather a Hitchcockian MacGuffin joining us to Eun-soo's journey toward Jun-oh's past and her understanding his wounds from it.

Adding rather commercial touch of humors, NA Hyeon, a successful screenwriter who wrote screen scripts of <May 18> and <Forever the Moments>, did a decent job on adaptation of the same-titled short story written by a female writer YOUN Seong-hee, a new talent in book scene. However, most of these additional touches sometimes rather loose the original story, which a textbook example showing the very beauty of short story.

The great joy of entering the heartbreak library comes from the actors. LEE Dong-wook makes a little goofy Jun-oh sympathetic. But it is most delightful to discover Eugene as an actress, who was previously a member of K-Pop idol girl band S.E.S.. Clearly, she shows her finest performance ever on transforming a single, bored librarian in her late-20's or maybe in early-30's into a unique character with complexity of cynicism, curiosity and compassion.

OH Jeong-yeon / Movie Columnist



Director LEE Joon-ik
Cast Su Ae, JUNG Jin-young, EUM Tae-woong
International Sales Showbox/Mediaplex, Inc.

1971 Vietnam, Desperately Searching for Love

<SUNNY>

Characters in LEE Joon-ik's films are benign, little cruel and slightly dense men. These male characters may not seem redeemable but never yield psychologically. When LEE's film is a period piece, we feel pity for the characters disregard to their class. In a contemporary-set film, the main characters are fragile bourgeois. Unlike his previous works, which were mainly driven by male characters, the voice of <Sunny> is a woman. The title character Soon-yi (Su Ae) is a naive country gal living in a small town in the '70s. Her mother-in-law forces her to conceive a son (so that family lineage can be continued), but her husband Sang-gil is in love with another woman. Once in a month she takes a trip to an army base where Sang-gil is stationed, but he'll barely look at her and only asks "Do you love me?" When Sang-gil is dispatched to fight in the Vietnam War, Soon-yi's mother-in-law is enraged and forces her to go after her husband. Soon-yi reluctantly packs a bag and gets ready to head for Vietnam even though she has no idea how to get there.

Jung-man is a leader of a club band who is desperate to take another trip to Vietnam to make money and to get away from loan sharks. He convinces his band members to follow along and with Soon-yi's money, and they secure their journey across the ocean as a consolatory band. In exchange Soon-yi becomes the band's singer and gets a stage name 'Sunny'. She only wishes that the band eventually stop in Hoian where her husband is said to be stationed. After a few embarrassingly unsuccessful performances, the band finds their groove and

becomes popular among Korean soldiers. While performing as a member of this band, Soon-yi finds out that Sang-gil's troop is surrounded by Vietcongs in the enemy territory.

Inspired by old photos of consolatory bands of its time, the writer of <Sunny> collaborated with director LEE who always had great interest in war history. '70s Vietnam setting was shot in Thailand for 5 months and Su Ae, who is filled with nostalgic images of the past, plays a duo role by portraying Soon-yi and Sunny on the screen. The most interesting aspect of <Sunny> is that it enhances familiar emotional expressions and it reaches a proper level of impression. In other words, it is similar to Hollywood way of enhancing emotions, and the interesting point comes from the way it is used in a very Korean context. Of course, this method is somewhat successful when attempting to win sympathy from the audience but emotions stay at a limited level. However, when a film is not too greedy about scoring more sympathy, it becomes a good example of a film that is accepted by the mainstream. In this regard, <Sunny> is successful in harmonizing Hollywood methods of enhancing emotions and incorporating awareness of the common Koreans under impoverished war context. Many popular Korean and American oldies, such as 'Danny Boy', 'Suzy Q', and 'He's Far Away', create a convincing backdrop of the Vietnam War in the '70s. The real emotion-invokers of <Sunny> are these songs.

JUNG Han-seok / Cine21



Director KIM Yoo-jin
Cast JUNG Jae-young, HAN Eun-jung, AHN Sung-ki, HUH Joon-ho
International Sales CJ Entertainment Inc.

Spectacle of Rocket, Invented in 15th Century

<THE DIVINE WEAPON>

1448, the 30th year of King Sejong's reign during Joseon Dynasty. The Ming Dynasty's meddling into Joseon's domestic affairs goes to extremes, as King Sejong secretly plans to develop the "Singijeon" (the divine weapon), a super-weapon of insurmountable power. King Sejong (AHN Sung-ki) commands Chang-gang (HUH Joon-ho), the chief royal guard warrior, to develop the weapon with Sul-ju (JUNG Jae-young) and Hong-li (HAN Eun-jung). The Ming army sets out to find Sul-ju's headquarters and completely destroy the slightest possibilities of developing Singijeon. After repeated failures in the project, Sul-ju risks his life to recover the Chong-tong Records for Hong-li, and Chang-gang and Sul-ju fights against the Ming with the completed divine weapon.

<The Divine Weapon> is a story about a weapon that existed 560 years ago. King Sejong and his son Munjong were very much interested in firearms and gunpowder, and tried to develop weapons superior to what the Ming possessed. King Sejong ordered new arms to be stationed at strategically vital army bases and the border areas. It also proves the fact that the Joseon Dynasty had better science and arms technology than the countries around it. But there are not many factual historical records on the divine weapon. Some says that it was destroyed to put down the rebellion when King Sejong's grandson was killed and other stories are about its weaknesses and inefficiencies.

Even though the story is based on historical references, the

film is more than just reviving the historical facts. It is a great combination of romance ; " between Sul-ju and Hong-li ; " and war ; " with the Ming and the Jurchens ; " on top of historical facts of the divine weapon and King Sejong's interests in technologies. Some people were worried that this film might make a false representation of the history but the film is aiming to be the part of popular culture and not trying to pass on historical messages. Although it is a historical drama set in the 14th century, <The Divine Weapon> contains modern aspects and even has moments of comic relief. And the superb computer graphics in the final battle scene enhances the power of the divine weapon.

Five years after the release of <Wild Card>, director KIM Yoo-jin came back with a well-crafted story based on historical records. You won't be able to take your eyes off the screen as you follow various episodes of the King, people around him, the merchants and the countries nearby. The organic construction of the story leads to the thrilling actions and spectacles. This film would be the best choice for audiences who seek thrilling action films.

KIM Do-hyung / FILM2.0



Director JUNG Ji-woo
Cast PARK Hae-il, KIM Hye-soo
International Sales CJ Entertainment Inc.

Urgent Love under Colonial Rule

<MODERN BOY>

In the 1930s, Seoul, called Gyeongseong at that time, was an interesting place, since it had different values and cultures uniquely weaved together. A traditional hat, called a Gat, and the traditional female hairstyle coexisted with a silk hat, white shoes, and a permanent wave. A gisaeng house and a traditional bar called a jumak prospered alongside a dance club and a western style bar. Conventional Confucian customs were promoted alongside individualistic values and socialist ideas. Seemingly attractive, this age of modernity cannot be recalled without the political circumstances in which Japanese imperialists ruled Joseon. In fact, the so-called colonial modernization theory, which argues that Japanese colonial rule contributed to the modernization of Joseon, is no more than an observation of only half of the story: the theory rules out the agony of the people that were hidden under the shadows of modernization.

<Modern Boy> is located on the coordinates of a horizontal axis of modernization and a vertical axis of Japanese suppression. Hae-myung (PARK Hae-il) is a character standing on the junction point. Thanks to his pro-Japanese father, he works at the Governor-General Building after having studied in Japan, and his life is surrounded by joy and beauty. His days are filled with wine and roses, and he leads a carefree, happy life. All this is changed by a woman, Nan-sil (KIM Hye-soo), who he meets at a club one day. The instant he sees her for the first time, he makes up his mind to "run the risk of life." He rushes to

Nan-sil, as if he were "an incarnation of romanticism," as he describes himself. However, his life begins to experience a drastic change, as a lunchbox Nan-sil gave him explodes violently in the Governor-General Building.

Similarly to the two previous feature films Director JUNG Ji-woo, love is a word that lies at the heart of <Modern Boy>. A reckless and dangerous love turned a man into a murderer (<Happyend>), and spellbound a woman with first love (<Blossom Again>). Hae-myung lacks discipline all the way, and appears less serious than the former two. Nevertheless, he is not an exception in that he falls in tragic love. Wrongly accused of being a terrorist, deprived of all his property, and even put in danger of losing his life, he wants nothing else but the love of Nan-sil.

Though not unaware of his poor identity as a young man under colonial rule, he originally sought after nothing but individualistic happiness. It is only urgent love that gets him entangled in the dark world of the independence movement. A fact that interests us in <Modern Boy> is that the film seeks to attribute to the changes of Hae-myung to focus on his inner world rather than on his awareness of national identity or longing for independence. The film shows us that the change of destiny for Hae-myung is caused by his inner paradoxical coordinates. <Modern Boy> is a movie based on LEE Ji-min's novel 'Can You Survive without Perishing or Dying?'.
 MOON Seok / Cine21



Director CHOI Ho
Cast CHO Seung-woo, SHIN Mina
International Sales Finecut Co., Ltd.

The Restoration of Obsolete Korean Rock

<GO GO 70S>

Since <Bye June> (1998), director CHOI Ho's filmography has been filled with the landscape of youthful exuberance. Wandering of youth (<Bye June>), whose entrance to adulthood has been continuously delayed, will of youth (<Who Are You?>), which wanted desperately to join the new era, and cruel destiny of youth (<Bloody Tie>), which dramatically degenerated into the remnants of society, are all examples of the director's concern with the problems of youth. <Go Go 70s> is no different. Several people from The Devils, a band in Seoul. The main character simply cannot forget the painful memories of his mother in his efforts to become an adult. He learns that Korean society doesn't necessarily let anyone into adulthood. With long hair, musical instruments, and late nights it is difficult to be seen as a real adult.

At one US military town club, singer Sang-kyu (CHO Seung-woo) and his troupe meet Man-sik and his team. Agreeing to form a six-member band 'The Devils', they head for Seoul dreaming of a bigger stage. The Devils were not immediately popular, but found themselves at the center of a nightclub craze over Mimi's go-go dance became a massive hit. But the curfew put in place by the military dictatorship took something away from the youth. The band members felt the pinch, and ultimately The Devils split up.

The storyline is the 'Korean version of <The Doors>', with the concert the 'Korean <Shine A Light>'. CHOI Ho revived the history of Korean rock, which had been almost dead after a dark

and oppressive era. Doing this, the storyline was sufficiently commercial. The band came together, it had lucky success, and broke up. Their manager was overly fussy and the columnist quite absurd ; ㄴ lending a very Hollywood musical style to the film.

With some differences though, CHOI managed to infuse his own style with the band playing soul music rather than rock, with the setting of a military town, and through the individual, era-specific stories of the characters. Therefore, unlike other youth stories, like <Singles> by Cameron CROWE or <Reality Bites> by Ben STILLER, the characters in this film are not necessarily 'cool', but are culprits of decadence and hedonism facing enormous barriers in the Korea of the day. CHOI Ho also goes further. Re-encountering each other by chance, the members of The Devils got busy preparing for one final concert. Using a variety of camera angles, great camera work, and some interesting experiments with sound, the concert scenes are, of course, the best in the film. <Go Go 70s> is a wonderful achievement from the perfectionist director in CHOI Ho.

JU Sung-chul / Cine21



Director RYOO Seung-wan
Cast LIM Won-hee, RYOO Seung-bum, KONG Hyo-jin, PARK Si-yeon
International Sales Showbox/Mediaplex, Inc.

Blatant but Stylish Amusement

<DACHIMAWA LEE>

It wasn't a film for the aged. The aim of <Dachimawa Lee> is to create a blatant & bold parody and amusement for much younger audiences. As if a huge open-hearted world of jokes to begin a long journey, the film takes us from meeting the Hollywood comedy filmmaking trio, ZAZ (Zucker, Abrahams, and Zucker), to shaking hands with the guy from <The Naked Gun>, to wrapping our arms around the Farrelly brothers, to looking at our closest neighbor, Stephen Chow, and then returning to the 'DC Inside Gallery' of our generation, at whirlwind speeds in search of laughter. If you saw the film's original and internet version <Dachimawa Lee> (2000), director RYOO Seung-wan's previous project, it won't be too difficult to enjoy this film. With the Dachimawa Lee character that used written lines in the previous version with 100% post synchronization, RYOO added elements of Korean spy action films and the 'Manchurian Westerns' of the 1960s to 1970s to the film.

In 1940, top secret documents containing lists of special agents, including female secret agent KEUM Yeon-ja (KONG Hyo-jin), disappeared during an operation. The leaders of the provisional government called for their secret weapon, Dachimawa LEE (LIM Won-hee). Armed with new weaponry from a top weapons scientist, Dr. NAM, Dachimawa LEE started his mission to solve the riddle with the glamorous spy Ma-ri as his new partner. During the operation, his mission met with crisis as he lost his memory during an attack from thieves on

horseback. Thanks to help from a girl, he mastered martial arts to take revenge, and launched a mission with a Japanese spy broker, who suddenly appeared and then vanished into thin air.

Similar to the 2000 version, the new <Dachimawa Lee> is a road movie, with characters often changing locations. The film asks viewers to believe in the settings of a Swiss snowfield that resemble a ski resort at Gangwon-do, South Korea, where the Chukhyub (National Livestock Cooperative Federation) branch of a Swiss bank was operating. A gentleman resembling Sir. KIM Gu mused over the welfare of his country as he watched Arisu water flow down the Amnok and Duman Rivers from the Office of Waterworks of the Seoul Metropolitan Government. Even students at Princeton University speak textbook English as if played straight from recording, helping them endure their dull campus lives. As a matter of fact, this film goes beyond situation comedy or character comedy. It is a sensational ridiculing of taboos and social power structures. In other words, it is a collection of many things that are meaningless and trivial. It is without shame. However, from the false overseas backdrops to the seemingly unnecessary captions for simple and poorly spoken foreign languages, it is a comedy that might look disorderly but is, in fact, quite refined and polished.

JU Sung-chul / Cine21



Director KANG Woo-suk
Cast SUL Kyung-gu, JUNG Jae-young, KANG Shin-il
International Sales CJ Entertainment Inc.

Endless Subtle Pleasures <PUBLIC ENEMY RETURNS>

KANG Chul-jung (SUL Kyung-gu), a detective at the Section in Charge of Crime of Violence, hands in his resignation after having doubts about his job as a detective. However, his resignation is postponed by a murder at a high school within the station's jurisdiction. Section chief (KANG Shin-il) persuaded him to retract his resignation, and Chul-jung is forced to participate in the investigation. Investigating Tae-jun (YEON Je-wook), a friend of the murdered student, he learns that the incident was related to Won-sul (JUNG Jae-young), the president of the Geoseong Group.

<Public Enemy Returns> underlines that it is a direct follow-up to series 1 <Public Enemy> (2002), skipping <Another Public Enemy> (2005), in which KANG played the part of a prosecutor. The Korean title of <Public Enemy Returns> is 'KANG Chul-jung'. Uniquely using the main character's name as the title, it is not as powerful as its predecessors. This may make it profitable, but it does lack the unrefined natural energy of <Public Enemy>, which overwhelmed most audiences. It's also apparent that <Public Enemy Returns> is more of a gangster movie rather than a detective movie.

Perhaps it could be said that <Public Enemy Returns> was created by dividing the power of <Public Enemy> into smaller pleasures. However, small pleasures are not inferior. The film sometimes misses the mark, but eventually reverses the circumstances by successively throwing out the second and the third trump cards. When Won-sul visits the enemy's den by

himself and negotiates with them is an impressive scene in which an imposing charisma and witty humor coexist. It seems to have been a long time since a Korean film made us laugh so much.

Indeed, director KANG Woo-suk who shown his comedy skills before, but this film also benefits from the great wit of JANG Jin, the screenwriter. Changed into a businessman after giving up a rather dissolute life, San-su asks a little daughter of Chul-jung, "how old are you?" Seeing the daughter stoutly reply to the question, "nine!", he said to himself, "she really is his daughter." Though only visiting San-su to lend money, Chul-jung hesitates to reveal his request out of self-respect. San-su also jokes with Chul-jung, saying "don't you know that a person without money becomes wrinkled like he has a coin under his eyes?" In addition, one of the reasons villain Won-sul is highlighted so much in this film is because of the playfulness between JANG Jin and JUNG Jae-young.

SUL Kyung-gu didn't have many chances to develop his character further than he had previously in the series. JUNG Jae-young shows his ability not to lose the toxicity of a villain in the least, yet deals well with the humorous aspects of the film.

LEE Dong-jin / Film Critic



Director KWAK Kyung-taek, AHN Gwon-tae
Cast CHA Seung-won, HAN Seok-kyu
International Sales Finecut Co., Ltd.

Duet for a Thrilling Vengeance <EYE FOR AN EYE>

It is easy to imagine a quote from the Code of Hammurabi from the title of this film, and make no mistake; it surely is a story of vengeance. However, contrary to expectations created by the title, the film does not concentrate on bloody confrontation and acts of vengeance between two main characters. Cunning criminal AHN Hyun-min (CHA Seung-won) has a bitter grudge and wants justice, but detective BAEK Seung-chan (HAN Seok-kyu) is not Hyun-min's target even though the film arranges a series of incidents in which Hyun-min unilaterally ridicules Seung-chan early in the film. Vicious attacks confuse audience about what the true intention of Hyun-min really is. At the point where audiences begin to realize how Seung-chan fit into Hyun-min's revenge scheme, the two characters suddenly become comrades.

This plot twist is not only to season the film with buddy action movie-like emotion, but to create heist movie-like excitement. Thus <Eye for an Eye> obviously tries to put tingling thrills instead of tragic maternal or family love, which were skillfully used in two critically and commercially successful recent Korean thrillers <Seven Days> and <The Chaser>.

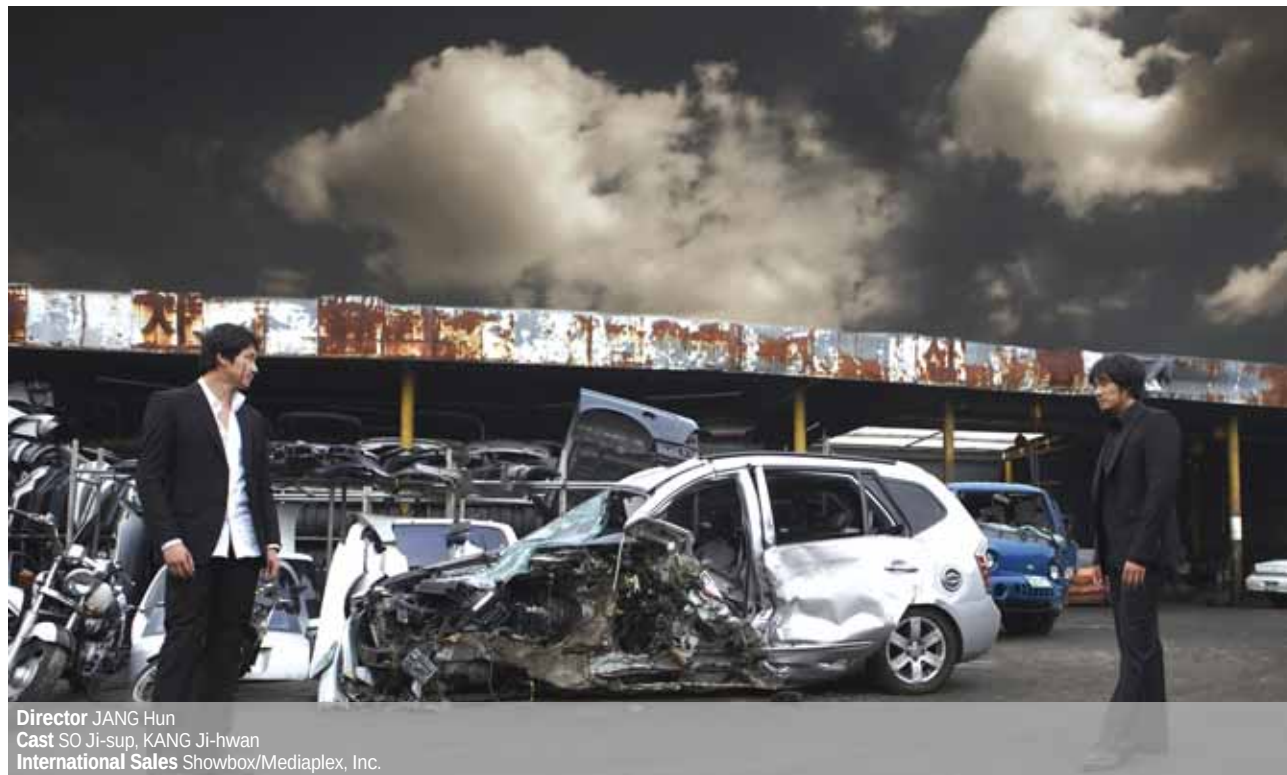
Hyun-min's band of Ocean's Eleven-like criminals pulls a daringly scripted heist and bags 600kg of gold bars and money contained in a truck that belongs to detective Seung-chan. Director KWAK plays safe when shooting this scene but still fresh enough to warrant a look. The said scene splits into multiple views in order to show many involved characters all at

once, thus creating an illusion of putting together a giant puzzle. KWAK then uses quick-cuts and montages to show how accomplices use and waste stolen money in cartoon-like camera movements, which is enough to win over audiences.

Backed with a sufficient plot structure, stylish camera movements and editing also feel fresh and clever. <Eye for an Eye> is an unexpected work from KWAK Kyung-taek who has thus far concentrated on making macho-romantic films like <Friend>, <Mutt Boy> and <Love>. The film is co-Director AHN Gwon-tae, KWAK's former assistant director for <Friend> and who debuted with <My Brother>. With a script by KIM Dong-woo, <Eye for an Eye> began production under AHN's helm but KWAK joined during production in order to help achieve detailed expressions of two opposite characters and grandiose action sequences.

HAN Seok-kyu plays Seung-chan, a detective on the verge of retirement, who often bursts out with crazy antics filled child-like giggles. CHA Seung-won, a famous comedy actor, plays a cold-hearted intellectual MBA-graduated criminal. CHA could play pretty much any character except one that involves crying. Indispensable comic relief comes from LEE Byung-joon who steals the show and charismatic villain played by SONG Chang-ui is also engrossing to watch.

CHOI Kwang-hee / Film Journalist



Director JANG Hun
Cast SO Ji-sup, KANG Ji-hwan
International Sales Showbox/Mediaplex, Inc.

Action Film with a Powerful Animal Energy

<ROUGH CUT>

This is a world of males. And it is a merciless world. It is a rough and powerful animal energy we see in <Rough Cut>. The struggles among males, greedy for territory, are vividly described in this action film.

Su-ta (KANG Ji-hwan), an action movie actor, struck his colleagues a number of times during the shoot, attracting a great deal of public criticism. This makes it difficult to find any actor willing to work with him. Su-ta is reminded of gangster Gang-pae (SO Ji-sup) as he was about to fight him at a hostess bar. Having dreamed of going on stage, Gang-pae agrees, suggesting he might actually fight with Su-ta.

<Rough Cut> is very straightforward. We can see this in the names of “Su-ta” ; “ which sounds like the Korean word for ‘star’ ; “ and “Gang-pae” ; “ similar to the Korean word for gangster ; “ who dreams of becoming an actor. As soon as the film gets rolling, two males bicker at a hostess bar, and then fight.

In the middle of the film the story loses its zest, focusing too heavily on the situation where Su-ta and Gang-pae experience crises in their domains. Nonetheless, the movie keeps the audience from totally losing interest with its interesting ideas and powerful narrative that keep the story progressing. The conflict scenes have a great deal of energy and power.

The film is also enjoyable in the way it blends fiction and reality, but impressive dialogue to do this. Living in an imaginary world, Su-ta laughs at Gang-pae, who continues to makes

mistakes in acting, saying “look at the camera, not at me.” Believing that a leading actor is referred to as a hero, Gang-pae strikes Su-ta excessively in the first action scene, and then scorns at him, saying, “don’t think about the camera, look at me.”

Curiously overlapping each other at times, longing and disregard make the story three dimensional. The message of the film is shown in its entirety by the way Gang-pae always wears black and Su-ta always wears white, but after fighting in mud, appear indistinguishable. SO and GANG contribute brilliantly, keeping the atmosphere and tones of the characters alive, as if they were really just being themselves.

Debuting as a director with the <Rough Cut>, JANG Hun has had a long training process with Director KIM Ki-duk. He worked for the film <Time> as an assistant director. Working with a script written by KIM, JANG seems to know at which contact point the film world of his master and the public meet. One wonders what his second movie will be like.

LEE Dong-jin / Film Critic



Director KWON Hyung-jin
Cast YOO Hae-jin, JIN Goo
International Sales Golden Network Asia Limited

Don't Stop! Don't Get Caught!

<THE TRUCK>

Chul-min (YOO Hae-jin) has a daughter with a heart condition and is in dire need of surgery. Urgently needing a large sum of money, he gets involved in dangerous illegal gambling, and saves himself by promising to dispose of dead bodies for the gang. On his way to Gangwon province where he intends to dump the bodies, he encounters a police van that had been involved in an accident, and ends up giving the police officer a ride. The real identity of the police officer turned out to be serial killer Young-ho (JIN Goo). Now carrying dead bodies in his truck and sitting next to a serial killer, Chul-min drives his truck to save his life and his daughter's life.

<The Truck> is a film that made full use of various codes of thriller films. It has many interesting components; riding a car with a stranger who might be a serial killer, limited spaces and time on the road, and a psychological game between two men stuck in this situation. The film is unique in its way of attempting a road-thriller film, which hasn't been done much in Korean film scene. The limited space in the truck creates more tension between two main characters and the empty road heading to Gangwon province adds more flair to the story.

It is a relatively low-budget movie with \$1.7 million budget and 37 shooting days, 50% of which was done with the truck. Successfully visualizing grotesque images of the road and the truck in a rainy night, the director threw two main characters in a truck playing mind games to hide their true identities. Adding an escaped serial killer to an already good setup created an

inescapable predicament, and events take a turn for the worse as Chul-min tries to save himself from the killer and not get caught red-handed with dead bodies.

Playing Chul-min, YOO Hae-jin's solitary struggle definitely stands out. It could be a funny coincidence that he played an assistant of a truck driver 11 years ago in <Final Blow> by CHUNG Ji-young and becomes a truck driver this time. But completely ruling out the comical sides of his usual character, YOO tries to find his way out with a collected attitude, which helps audience to be immersed in the story. And playing the serial killer, JIN Goo creates the image of a cool-headed serial killer who feels nothing towards killing and is full of anger and cynicism.

KIM Do-hyung / FILM2.0



Director PARK Jae-sik
Cast KO Eun-a, CHAE Min-seo, JUNG Yoo-seok
International Sales Mirovision Inc.

The Horror Crouching Behind a Lonely Girl

<THE LONER>

PARK Jae-sik's first feature <The Loner> is a horror film about 'Hikikomori', a Japanese term referring to the phenomenon of reclusive individuals who have chosen to withdraw from social life, often seeking extreme degrees of isolation and confinement due to various personal and social factors in their lives. The term hikikomori refers to both the sociological phenomenon in general as well as to individuals belonging to this societal group.

17-year-old Soo-na (KO Eun-a) lives in a huge mansion with her grandmother and uncle without any financial burdens. But she starts living a life of hikikomori after experiencing suicide of her best friend Min-ah. She locks herself in her room, talks to an unidentified being and tries to kill herself in front of her family. Adding to her strange behaviors, she becomes aggressive to the point where she poses threat to her family. Soo-na's uncle Se-jin (JUNG Yoo-seok) asks his girlfriend Yoon-mi (CHAE Min-seo) who researches hikikomori at her college lab, for help. Se-jin and Yoon-mi struggles to make Soo-na unlock her room, but there is another reason for Se-jin to get into the so badly. Yoon-mi senses that Soo-na's bizarre behaviors are related to some hidden family history and starts her own investigation. But the situation changes frighteningly when Soo-na's door is finally opened.

Although PARK Jae-sik made a late feature début, he has been building up his film career since working on an action film called <The Supreme Order> by KIM Jung-yong in 1991. He worked as an assistant director for the psycho thriller <The

Collector> (by MOON Shin-ku, 1996) and helped plan and write the slasher film <Record> (by KIM Ki-hun, 2000) and now he presents a skillful combination of horror and thriller solely based on what he learned during his career so far. He takes a social issue with a twisted story behind and creates tensions, focusing on a family secret and setting the story in a huge mansion. The set of the mansion cost \$300,000 to build and took a month to construct. With a high spiral staircase and a glass-walled indoor garden, the set implies the hidden secrets of the story. And it'll maximize the terror felt by the audience who will part-take in the experience of this film as observers with broad knowledge of the story that characters won't be privileged to.

KIM Do-hyung / FILM2.0



Director Chang
Cast NAM Gyu-ri, LEE Beom-soo, YOON Jeong-hee, KIM Beom
International Sales Mirovision Inc.

A School Ghost Story Creates Sensuous Imagery

<DEATH BELL>

During midterm examinations, I-na (NAM Gyoo-ri) was troubled by nightmares in which she was chased by ghosts through a deserted school. A model student, Jo-beom, was suffering from illusionary ghosts. Soon after the midterm examinations, the top twenty students gathered to prepare for their college entrance exams. The Korean language teacher, Chang-wook (LEE Beom-soo), and English teacher So-yeong were in charge of the course. On the first day, a mysterious voice came out of the classroom speaker. It said the midterm examinations needed to be re-sat, with death to the students a consequence if they answered any questions incorrectly.

Horror films have been scant this year in Korea, making <Death Bell> quite unique. <Death Bell> is a horror film set in a school, along the lines of <Whispering Corridors> (1998) and <Bunshinsaba> (2004). As the Korean title "Midterm of Blood" suggests, the most important idea of horror in the film is that of the 'midterm examination'. Every time one question ends, the screen displays the names of the deceased and the time through captions, as if each hour of an actual midterm examination has passed. Students not being able to leave the school add to the sense of claustrophobia.

Known for his previous work in music videos for Korean artists like BoA and SG Wannabe, Chang debuted as a film director through <Death Bell>, revealing his sensibilities for sensuous imagery. He also wrote the screenplay. It has some quite shocking scenes, such as engraving of letters on a human

body and people being killed in washing machines. Chang uses flickering lights in the corridors and colorful nightclub lights to increase the sense of fear. He also worked hard to diversify the characters and the settings to avoid monotony. The director created drama effectively, for example when the composed Chang-wook lost his cool as the situation became serious, and by showing the friendship between Ji-won and I-na.

The film does have the problem of diluting the atmosphere of fear with a storyline that focuses excessively on background incidents. Nonetheless, <Death Bell> has enough in terms of shocking images, the storyline, and reversals to satisfy audiences.

LEE Si-woo / FILM2.0



Director YANG Jong-hyeon
Cast SHIN Hyun-jun, KANG Hae-jung
International Sales Golden Network Asia Limited

A Woman Wanting to Die Meets a Killer

<KISS ME, KILL ME>

A lonely killer and a woman wishing to kill herself! Assuming they meet each other, we have found a genuine “greasy” music video for a Korean ballad remake! However, understanding <Kiss Me, Kill Me> is not so easy. Proud of his 100% success rate, professional killer Hyun-jun (SHIN Hyun-jun) accepts the easy job of killing “a man sleeping by himself.” But it is not a man. It is a weeping woman, Jin-yeong (KANG Hae-jung), awaiting her own death. She had just been dumped by her boyfriend of seven years. “Not wanting to kill herself with medicine,” she gave another man the contract to kill her. Hyun-jun’s everyday life derails from the right track from then on.

Feeling pity for her, he falters. Uncomfortable with his feelings of love, he cannot concentrate on his work, like a screw falling off a machine. He speaks and acts against his own will. Having escaped from her despair since she met him, Jin-yeong also begins to act strangely. The story progresses in an unpredictable direction, with his agency and her former boyfriend intervening between the two. The film might be referred to as a “tragic melodrama.” Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the ironic humor the two characters’ encounter causes.

<Kiss Me, Kill Me> is the feature debut of Director YANG Jong-hyeon, who directed the short film <A Site Where a Doghouse Is Located>, which screened at the Rotterdam International Film Festival 2002. While he was jobless, YANG went to see his friend in Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia. He saw the tallest building in the world. At that time, he imagined what it

would look like if anyone aimed at him with a gun. <Kiss Me, Kill Me> was derived from this image, rather than the need to send audiences a particular message. Maybe Director YANG regarded the relationship between a sniper and a proposed victim as “an unexpected encounter between two people.” In terms of subject matter, “the casual encounter,” the film is closely associated with <A Site Where a Doghouse Is Located>.

This short film also shows a woman who has made up her mind to commit suicide. When she goes up to the rooftop of a building to kill herself, she comes across a man. They talk with each other about their own past stories. It seems <Kiss Me, Kill Me> is a film in which the two persons meeting each other in the atmosphere of death reveal their wounds to each other, finding consolation. The key is how SHIN Hyun-jun would portray a killer. SHIN established himself as a professional comic actor in <Marrying the Mafia 2: Enemy-in-Law>, <Marrying the Mafia 3: Family Hustle>, and <Barefoot Gi-bong>. Will he not look like Sang-yeon, the character appeared in the film <Guns and Talks>? SHIN explained, “While Sang-yeon was a killer lacking only by 2%, Hyun-jun is a complete killer. The difference is that Hyun-jun is not so good at love.” This also stimulates our curiosity about what chemical action will be caused by any encounter between SHIN and KANG Hae-jung from <Old Boy>.

KANG Byeong-jin / Cine21



Director JUNG Byung-gil
Cast KWAK Jin-seock, JEON Sye-jin, SHIN Sung-il, KWON Gui-duck
International Sales Mirovision Inc.

Documentary Could be So Much Fun!

<ACTION BOYS>

After premiering at the 9th Jeonju International Film Festival, this documentary about Korean stuntmen has been invited to many international film festivals including New York Asian Film Festival, Vancouver International Film Festival and Tanabe Benkei Film Festival. <Action Boys> is a documentary with a sense of humor and witty comments, which proved that a documentary doesn’t have to be too serious or dull but funny and entertaining. The film captures comical episodes of unique characters behind the scene, and not just being an exposé of film industry malpractice.

Director JUNG Byung-gil graduated from Seoul Action School in 2004. He was an athletic student while growing up but later on he wanted to go to an art school. After failing art school exams, he wasted away his days watching and idolizing Stephen CHOW before entering the Seoul Action School. After directing his graduation film <Standing on the Edge of a Knife>, he decided to make a documentary featuring his classmates. And after trying out a humorous documentary with <Three Important Components for Rock’n Roll>, he accomplished his style with <Action Boys>. It took one and a half year to shoot at various locations and sets of many TV dramas and films, another 4 months to edit over 300 tapes and completed as a 110-minute documentary.

It contains the real life of the director’s classmates in their day-to-day life, trying to capture their passion and dedication for their work along with delightful interviews showing their views

on life and work. While many other documentaries focus on harsh reality that stuntmen realize on their own through irony, this film focuses on how special it is to be young and striving for hard work. But the story ends with everyone quitting, save for one, after the death of JI Joong-hyeon, martial art director of <The Good, The Bad, The Weird>. But that doesn’t mean the director is expressing his skepticism or doubts about being a stuntman. Even though it was not the exact ending he had in mind, he follows the decision of his friends looking for new passion in their lives.

After all, <Action Boys> is a story of personal growth of characters in their twenties. No matter where they are in their life, they’re all doing their best to achieve their dreams. The film makes you think about how you can enjoy your life right now and how you’ll look back in the future and not regret anything.

KIM Do-hyung / FILM2.0



Director MIN Kyu-dong | Cast JU Ji-hun, KIM Jae-wook, YU A-in, CHOI Ji-ho | International Sales Finecut Co., Ltd.

Sweet Lies for love <LOST AND FOUND>

<Lost and Found> is an ambitious romantic comedy coming in Christmas season at local theatres. Everything is going messy around a vibrant TV scriptwriter Ji-ho (PARK Jin-hee). She gets fired from the work and pickpocketed on her way. However, her life turns another page when she runs after pickpocket and ends up to be hit by a car. That car was driven by Min-woo (LEE Gi-woo), her first love she has longed to see again for 10 years. Ji-ho lies that she has amnesia after the car accident so that she can see him more. A sweet and nice lighting designer Min-woo brings her his home and takes good care of her. Ji-ho can never be happier, but in order to keep him near her, she should stay on her lie, and even more lies to make the first one safe. Even she tries to turn herself with wild character into a classic quiet homebody-type girl, which is Min-woo's girl in his dream. On one day of her happy lying life, she encounters Dong-sik (JO Han-sun), another friend from childhood who happens to live nearby. He insists to take charge of caring her and she cannot resist owing to keep consistency in her lies. After her moving to Dong-sik's place, he goes with her every place for bringing her memory back that she has never lost, only his efforts make her lie more. Things around them become more and more out of control by all these lousy but ever sweetest lies.

JUNG Han-seok / Cine21



Director JUNG Jung-hwa | Cast PARK Jin-hee, JO Han-sun, LEE Gi-woo | International Sales CJ Entertainment Inc.



Director KANG Chul-Woo | Cast LEE Sun-Kyun, LEE Soo-Kyung, Eugene, LEE Min-ki | International Sales STUDIO2.0

The Tale of 4 Boys in a Cake Shop <ANTIQUE>

MIN Kyu-dong, who co-directed <Memento Mori> and directed <All For Love>, just finished shooting his third feature film <Antique>. Based on a Japanese manga of the same name by YOSHINAGA Fumi, it was already made into a TV series and animation series in Japan. It is also the third Korean film to adapt Japanese manga after <Old Boy> and <200 Pounds Beauty>. "As a big fan of the source material, I always wanted to make it into a film," director MIN said. The film revolves around Jin-hyuk (JU Ji-hun) as he opens a cake shop because he thinks he can fall in love with girls who visit his shop. Because he knows nothing about cakes he recruits Sun-woo (KIM Jae-wook), a gay patissier who loved Jin-hyuk in high school. Ki-bum (YU A-in), fascinated with Sun-woo's cakes, becomes his assistant and Jin-hyuk's bodyguard Soo-young (CHOI Ji-ho) becomes the shop's waiter. The film presents unusual and interesting episodes of these 4 men that take place in the cake shop. JU Ji-hun from 'Goong', KIM Jae-wook from 'Coffee Prince #1', YU A-in from <Boys of Tomorrow> and CHOI Ji-ho from 'Dog and Wolf', all portray respective characters convincingly.

JUNG Han-seok / Cine21

What Happened at the Resort? <ROMANTIC ISLAND>

Boracay, Philippines's famous resort. Four men and women, who ran away from their everyday life, experience the most unforgettable romance of their lives in a 'romantic island' just as the title implies. Handsome hotshot businessman Jae-hyuk (LEE Sun-kyun), he is already a CEO of his company in his thirties. But many of his colleagues are not happy about how he operates the company and there's a rumor of his resignation. Soo-jin is an ordinary office clerk from a poor family. Getting sick and tired of her life, she takes a vacation to an exotic island for the first time, totally free from work and family. Having gone through thousands of job interviews without any result and just dumped by his girlfriend, Jung-hwan (LEE Min-ki) came to the island thinking he needed to go anywhere but where he was. A famous idol star, Ga-young (Eugene), is stressed out from her grueling schedules and tired of being a celebrity and takes an impulsive vacation to enjoy a normal life. In real life, there's no chance these four people could ever come into contact with each other. But they meet at the beautiful resort and start falling for each other. LEE Sun-kyun, who starred in the hit TV show 'Coffee Prince #1', plays the main character. Singer and actor Eugene, and newcomers LEE Min-ki and LEE Soo-kyung are all determine to make a splash with this film as well.

JUNG Han-seok / Cine21

CROSSING

A family split by an ongoing cold war.

Loig Calomro
upcail. Harain Horong
Jaiigaz. On Hog Calomro
6H Ilum. Caiig Gilu



directed by KIM Tae-kyun | starring CHA In-pyo, SHIN Myeong-cheol

presented by Big House / Vantage Holdings | a Camp B production | executive producers CHEONG Eui-seok, KIM Sun-yong, JHUNG Seung-koo, CHIN Hee-moon
producers Patrick CHEH, HONG Jee-yong, KIM Tae-kyun | screenplay by LEE Yoo-jin | cinematographer CHUNG Han-cheol | editor GO Im-pyo
lighting director PARK Jong-whan | music director KIM Tae-seong | production designer KIM Hyun-ok

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